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THEORIES OF HUMAN NATURE:
HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY
WITH A PERSONAL VIEW

A Thesis

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by

Paul Frederick Abel

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INTRODUCTION

The ancient cry of the Hebrew Psalmist, "What is man?" is contemporary with every age. Anthropological quests and problems have been of major concern in each succeeding generation. Various theories of human nature have brought turbulent disputes into Christendom from her early history until the present. Even during those times when scarcely a ripple could be detected upon the theological surface with reference to anthropological differences, a strong undertow of contention made smooth sailing difficult. Rather than nearing a solution, these questions continue unabated and are as relevant to modern thought as to any previous period.

The basic pillars upon which theology is constructed are so interrelated that any alteration in one will effect the whole structure. For example, the view taken toward Anthropology will effect Christology. If man is considered sufficient within himself to make the furthest possible advancement, if he has latent within his human nature all of the necessary qualifications to engender his own salvation, the Atonement becomes meaningless, and the life and death of Christ degenerate into a dramatic tragedy. If, on the other hand, man is unable to attain the <u>summum bonum</u> through his native powers, or if his human nature should actually be depraved, thus leading to his perversion rather than salvation,

the Atonement becomes of tremendous importance. The reverse is equally true respecting the relation of Christology to Anthropology. It is in this area that many of the differences between modern religious orthodoxy and liberalism occur. It can be readily seen that a thorough understanding of human nature is necessary if one is to adhere intelligently to any theological position.

A good summary of the objectives of education is that quoted by Reeder from a statement made by the Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education. The commission gave the following seven cardinal objectives of secondary education: (1) Good health, (2) Command of fundamental processes, (3) Worthy home membership, (4) Vocational efficiency, (5) Civic efficiency, (6) Worthy use of leisure time, and (7) Ethical character. [1] Basic to whatever philosophy of education which may be behind the method of achieving these objectives, especially numbers 2, 3, 6 and 7, is the philosophy of human nature to which the educator adheres. Should education be dominated by humanitarianism, the doctrine "that man's obligations are limited to, and dependent alone upon, man and human relationships; and that man's nature is perfectible through his own efforts"? [2]

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1 Ward G. Reeder, A First Course in Education (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1939), p. 84.

2 Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (fifth edition, Springfield, Mass.: G. and C. Merriam Co., Publishers, 1941).

Or should education realize that man is incapable of reaching these goals within himself and become the handmaiden of, or at least a co-worker with, religion once again? Can humanity realize its highest potentialities by mere educational processes or methods; or is there something off-balance in human nature to the extent that some outside redemptive force is necessary? In the light of these and similar questions, the view of human nature becomes pertinent to education.

Much the same can be said of the connection between human nature and the social sciences. In contemporary America, with its emphasis upon material prosperity, perhaps no subdivision of the social sciences is more revealing of our social temper than is economics.

> Economics . . . deals with the activities, conditions, and mutual relationships of men in making their living and accumulating wealth. . . . [It is] the study of human behavior in making, owning, exchanging, or using wealth. The economist seeks fundamental truths and tendencies in the broad field of human actions, conditions, and relationships, and with this knowledge he is in a position to assist in planning and creating an ever-increasing richness of human life. [3]

It is quite necessary to know which view of human nature would best achieve the goal of economics and the social sciences as a whole which aim "at manhood, well-balanced development of character, and the equitable organization of human relationships." [4] Is man, in his natural state, only

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3 Richard T. Ely and Ralph H. Hess, Outlines of Economics (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1937), p. 6f.

4 Ibid., p. 9.

waiting for self-expression to be guided until it blossoms forth into the perfectly socialized character, or is he basically selfish and unable to become truly altruistic except through a transformation?

From the foregoing discussion the conclusion is drawn that an intensive study in this field is not only profitable but mandatory if a person is to be properly oriented in the world in which he lives. A working theory of human nature is the prerequisite foundation upon which one's whole philosophy concerning man and his relationships depends.

> The accepted psychology of an age writes the history of that age, for from man's understanding or misunderstanding of himself flows his ethics, economics, politics and religion. A wrong view of human nature inevitably leads to distorted morals, false values in economics, unjust government and idolatrous worship.[5]

The term anthropology carries two connotations--the scientific and the theological. Scientific anthropology deals with primitive man, geographic distribution and the ethnic background of races. In its theological sense anthropology is primarily concerned with the moral and religious aspects of man. This paper will deal with the term in this latter sense.

The general pattern of this paper will be to discover the views held concerning the origin of man, the natural condition of human nature, and the remedial prescriptions

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5 Leslie R. Marston, Youth Speaks! (Winona Lake, Indiana: Light and Life Press, 1939), p. 137.

if any are considered necessary, as offered by: first, the historic positions; second, contemporary schools of thought; and finally, a personal view.

PART I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

CHAPTER I.

BIBLICAL VIEW

I. OLD TESTAMENT

For Christian orthodoxy the valid record of the human race which can boast the greatest antiquity is the Hebrew Scriptures. Man, according to the Bible, was of a divine origin, having been created by a special act of God himself. He was the crowning act of creation and not something which emerged by natural processes. Man occupied the central place in the creation narrative; all else was merely appropriate scenic background. [1] To him was given the unique position of dominion over all that had been created prior to his existence. [2]

One theologian seeks to show man's pre-eminence over the rest of creation, and the new order of being involved, by noting the change in the form of the creative fiat when man was created:

> No longer do we have the words, "Let there be," which involve the immediacy of the creative fiat in conjunction with secondary causes; but "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness"--an expression which asserts the power of the creative work in conjunction with deliberative counsel. . . . Man, therefore, is the culmination of all former creative acts, at once linked

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1 H. Wheeler Robinson, The Christian Doctrine of Man (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, Third Edition, 1926), p. 61.

2 Genesis 1:26.

> with them as the crown of creation, and distinct from them as a new order of being. In him the physical and the spiritual meet.[3]

According to the Hebrew view, man is a complex creature who shares in the material world, yet transcends it:

> And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.[4]

> And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth. . . .[5]

Man can never get away from his oneness with the physical universe:

> For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts. . . . yea, they have all one breath, so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast. . . .[6]

> As for man his days are as grass. As a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.[7]

Yet, he is just as much a spiritual creature:

> So God created man in his own image.[8]

> As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God.[9]

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3 H. Orton Wiley, Christian Theology (Kansas City, Missouri: Beacon Hill Press, 1940-1943), II, 9f.

4 Genesis 2:7

5 Genesis 1:26

6 Ecclesiastes 3:19

7 Psalms 103:15

8 Genesis 1:27

9 Psalms 42:1f

Calhoun maintains that man can never be fully understood except in the terms of eternity, for he is haunted by what seems to be "a perpetual summons from beyond every present appearance." [10] The Scriptures give ample evidence of both this transcendental quality in the human race and its identity with the material universe. Thus the Bible clearly adheres to a middle course between mere materialism on the one hand and an extreme idealism on the other by plainly teaching that man has both a body and a soul neither of which is a mere semblance for each most truly exists. [11] Nevertheless, it should not be inferred that the Hebrews thought of man as the radical dualism which characterized Greek thought. Wheeler Robinson argues against any real dualism whatever in the Old Testament concept of man. He traces the developing Hebrew thought concerning man's soul and body through a parallel series. It was really the body, not the soul, which was the most characteristic element of the Hebrew personality. About eighty body parts are mentioned in the Old Testament, and out of the functions of these physical organs grew a complex psychical usage of the

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10 R. L. Calhoun, "The Christian Understanding of Man," quoted by Harvie Branscomb and John K. Benton, Man's Disorder and God's Design, Five Studies in the Bible, prepared for use at the North American Inter-Seminary Conference, Oxford, Ohio, June, 1947, n.p., n.d., p. 3.

11 J. Gresham Machen, The Christian View of Man (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1947), p. 158.

terms. [12] Thus the "heart" was used to speak of the psychical center of man just as it was considered the physical center, and the term "flesh" was often used with psychical implications. [13]

Robinson also maintains that any ethical dualism of the soul and body is remote from Hebrew thought. The word "flesh" is sometimes used to indicate man's essential, but frail and dependent nature in contrast with God or "Spirit." Job [14], however, utilizes the concept of physical frailty to explain his ethical imperfection; therefore, to be consistent, the "flesh" could not be considered essentially evil. [15]

Robinson concludes, therefore, that the idea of the "heart" or breath-soul and the "flesh" or physical organs developed as inter-related and parallel concepts. In other words, the Hebrews used the terms as merely different aspects of the unity of personality. [16]

The Creation story states that man was created in the image of God. "Christian anthropology rests on the conviction that man is an animal made in the image of God, which

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12 Robinson, op. cit., p. 12.

13 Ibid., pp. 22, 24.

14 Job 4:17; 25:5, 6.

15 Robinson, op. cit., p. 25.

16 Ibid., pp. 26f.

means that he is not an animal at all." [17] Since body and spirit are inseparable in the Hebrew conception of the unity of personality, it cannot be said that in the totality of his personality man was created in the image of God. Machen points out that this concept of the imago Dei could not possibly have reference to man's physical characteristics for God is a spirit and has no corporeal body. It must, then, refer exclusively to the soul. [18] Yet even in his spiritual capacities and attainments man is quite other than God, "but in that he is a spiritual being, capable of fellowship with God, and capable of reflecting something of the character of God, he has a measure of affinity with God." [19]

This Biblical concept seems to imply that man was created with a "moral personality like God himself" possesses. [20] The personality is generally held to consist of both rational and moral elements. The natural image of God includes three outstanding characteristics which belong to God, yet were imparted to human nature; namely, spirituality, knowledge, and immortality. No violence is done to the Biblical view

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17 John S. Whale, Christian Doctrine (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947), p. 12.

18 Machen, op. cit., p. 169.

19 H. H. Rowley, The Re-discovery of the Old Testament (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1946), p. 209.

20 Olin Alfred Curtis, The Christian Faith (New York: Eaton and Maine, 1905), p. 193.

of man when it is said that "personality in man with its rational, affectional, and volitional nature, is like personality in God," although the attributes of the latter are infinite and their essence transcends the finite limitations of man's powers. [21]

Man was not only endowed with these powers of personality at creation, but he was made morally responsible for the right use of his natural abilities. In this realm the moral image of God was involved. "The [natural image] has to do with the constitution of man as possessing self-consciousness and self-determination; the [moral image] has to do with the rightness or wrongness of the use of these powers." [22]

Divergent views concerning the meaning of the image of God in man have led to differing opinions concerning man's primitive state. In general, Evangelical thinkers have held the view that man, as he was originally created, possessed a subjective state of primitive holiness. Machen and Wiley agree that the Bible implies that man was not created morally neutral, "but his nature was positively directed to the right and opposed to the wrong." [23] Goodness was not accidental in

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21 Wiley, op. cit., p. 33.

22 Ibid., p. 38.

23 Machen, op. cit., p. 172.

man's original nature, but was stamped into man's very nature by the act of creation. God, in reviewing his creative work, including man, made the solemn observation that all which he had made was good. [24] It would seem impossible to interpret this statement as referring to creation apart from man; therefore, it must also be an expression of "the divine approbation of man's goodness." [25]

The origin of evil, especially the origin of man's involvement in evil, has given rise to a great deal of speculation. The third chapter of Genesis has been variously interpreted, and evaluations of it range all of the way from attributing to it an absolute literalism and historicity to either calling it mythological or completely discrediting the whole account. N. P. Williams traces three classical answers to the problem of evil: (1) the Hindu "unmoral monism" which considers Good and Evil alike as necessary appearances that are both transcended by the Absolute, (2) absolute dualism (Persian view) which makes the powers of Good and Evil co-eternal, and (3) the Judaistic and Christian theory of the "Fall" and of "Original Sin." [26]

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24 Genesis 1:31

25 Wiley, op. cit., p. 50.

26 Norman Powell Williams, The Ideas of the Fall and of Original Sin (London: Longmans, Green and Co., Ltd., 1927), pp. 6-10.

Williams finds it difficult to find any true idea of "Original Sin" in any pre-exilic Judaistic thinking. In his estimation, such a doctrine arose during the post-exilic period as the result of reflection upon the universality of Actual Sin. [27] Robinson lends his support to the view that the Old Testament makes no dogmatic assertions about such theories as the absolute universality of sin, the idea of inborn sin, and the origin as well as consequences of sin for human nature. He admits that the universality of sin is presupposed and even explicitly stated from the prophetic period on but not prior to that time. He points out a few texts which would imply inborn sin, [28] but interprets them as references to a universally sinful race--a sinful environment rather than an inherited sinfulness or original sin. [29] He feels that it would be inexcusable naivete to attach any historicity to Genesis 3. In his estimation this chapter allegorically illustrates the increase of evil which inevitably accompanies the rise of civilization and knowledge. There is no hint, he concludes, that human nature was ever changed by acts of disobedience, and still less that a corrupt nature was ever passed on to posterity. [30]

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27 Ibid., pp. 12f.

28 Job 14:4; Genesis 8:21; Psalms 51:5.

29 Robinson, op. cit., pp. 56f.

30 Ibid., pp. 58ff.

Exegesis of this type is hardly acceptable to Evangelical Christianity which has always insisted upon the historical validity of the Genesis record even while admitting that some modes of expression may be symbolical. A theologian as conservative as Wiley does not hesitate to admit that the account of the Fall in Genesis 3 is full of rich symbolism; nevertheless, it is "an inspired record of historical facts, bound up with a deep and rich symbolism."[31] To treat this record as wholly mythological, however, is not to do justice to the historical character of the complete record.

From the vantage point of the present day it is difficult to reconstruct the true Hebraic conception of the human involvement in evil without falling into the error of subjectivism manifested by both Williams and Robinson. It is logical to assume, however, that, even though there was no systematic doctrine of Original Sin in the early thought of the Israelites, what was later explicitly stated had always been implicit in the early Hebrew Scriptures and thought. By simply taking the records as they stand and by accepting the Bible as an indissoluble unity, the implication is inescapable that man fell according to the Genesis record, an act whereby the race became universally sinful. Christ

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[31] Wiley, op. cit., p. 52.

seemed to credit the book of Genesis with a reliable historicity [32] and Paul does likewise. [33] Thus while the application of a true historical criticism is valid, it is hardly justifiable to say arbitrarily and with certainty that the extant Pentateuch was not accepted by the Hebrews as a basis for the explanation of the universality of actual sin until the time of post-exilic Judaism. The views expressed by Williams and Robinson, based upon the results of higher Biblical criticism, would not admit the "extant Pentateuch," but this paper shall assume the conservative position which finds no difficulty in accepting the Mosaic authorship.

The Hebrew treated evil as neither monistic nor dualistic, but as temporal and contingent. Implied in this concept was man's self-consciousness and self-determination whereby he was free to choose his fate. Evil was, therefore, not necessary; its origin was to be traced to an initial self-determined rebellion when the finite will asserted its independence from the all-holy will of the Creator. [34] It was evident that evil existed in the universe prior to man's advent upon the earth; nevertheless, mankind was not involved

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32 Matthew 19:4, 5; John 8:44.

33 II Corinthians 11:3; I Timothy 2:13, 14.

34 Williams, op. cit., pp. 7f.

in it until the rebellious act of the Fall.

What was the Hebrew conception of human nature after this act of disobedience? The following texts taken from all parts of the Old Testament furnish a clue to both the universality and congenital character of mankind's sinfulness:

> . . . the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth. [35]

> . . . for there is no man that sinneth not. [36]

> Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one. [37]

> The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. [38]

> Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. [39]

> The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies. [40]

> . . . a transgressor from the womb. [41]

> The heart is deceitful above all things and des-

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35 Genesis 8:21

36 I Kings 8:46; II Chronicles 6:36

37 Job 14:4

38 Psalms 14:2, 3.

39 Psalms 51:5

40 Psalms 58:3

41 Isaiah 48:8

perately wicked; who can know it? [42]

> For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not. [43]

From some of these Scriptures which undeniably imply the natural depravity of the human heart, it is difficult to determine by what means of exegesis Robinson makes them solely racial and environmental in their application.

There are several problems which the Old Testament raises concerning the human situation. The polarity between God's absolute sovereignty and man's freedom is a delicately balanced problem which the weight of evidence tips first in favor of the one and then in favor of the other. In some instances, the weight of evidence points toward a determinism in a manner which is difficult to deny. For example, the Pentateuch asserts that God hardened Pharoah's heart. Nevertheless, the evidence of the Bible taken as a unit tends to be in favor of man's freedom even subsequent to the Fall. By that Fall man was rendered imperfect in all of his faculties, including his volition, but he still had the power of choice. Otherwise the appeal of Joshua, "Choose you this day whom ye will serve," [44] would be contradictory. The Old Testament depicts the dealings between God and man as being

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42 Jeremiah 17:9.

43 Ecclesiastes 7:20.

44 Joshua 24:15.

on a reciprocal basis. God's iniative is predominant, it is true, but not to the exclusion of man's necessary response which he is free to make one way or another. This freedom of choice is vividly depicted in Deuteronomy as follows:

> . . . if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments. . . . the Lord thy God shall set thee on high . . . [but] . . . if thou wilt not . . . curses shall come upon thee.[45]

A second problem involves the concept of the individual versus the implications of a corporate personality which are found in the Old Testament. Robinson makes the assertion that pre-exilic Hebrew thought did not make room for the individual's rights in society or his value of God for religion. Whether in relation to man or to God, the individual was treated as merged into the group. Even though each man had an individual consciousness, he was made to accept unquestioningly certain social customs and religious ideas based on the idea of a corporate personality. Therefore, concludes Robinson, prior to the time of the prophets, when the individual was at last freed from the bonds of the corporate personality, sin was more the violation of "custom" than an offense against God.[46]

Paternal absolutism, the corporate suffering of Achan's

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45 Deuteronomy 28:1, 15.

46 Robinson, op. cit., pp. 27f., 47ff.

family, the destruction of whole dynasties in the Northern Kingdom because of the sin of one king, and other similar instances recorded in the Old Testament lend weight to the view expressed by Robinson. In all probability the proverb, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge," [47] expresses a popular conception during Ezekiel's day. On the other hand, to make the pre-exilic idea of sin to rest solely on the violation of custom, thus ignoring the idea of an offense against God, overlooks too many weighty implications and assertions. For example, Adam's sin was purely personal even though corporate consequences followed. The record of the Patriarchal period of Hebrew history reveals very little "custom" to be violated. The Abrahamic covenant included the posterity, but as far as Abraham was concerned, his relationship to God was purely individual. The idea of a corporate personality is difficult to harmonize with the following passage from the Law of Moses which rests the responsibility for sin solely on the individual:

> The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers; every man shall be put to death for his own sin.[48]

Not only was this verse hidden away in the Mosaic code, but

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47 Ezekiel 18:2.

48 Deuteronomy 24:16.

it was practiced, at least in the time of Amaziah, king of Judah. [49] David certainly recognized his offence against God rather than against mere "custom" in his hymn of repentence: "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight." [50]

Elijah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Jeremiah are each cited by Robinson as leaders in the Prophetic Reformation which marked a new level in Israel's moral evolution. It was these men who realized that sin is personal rebellion against the will of God, not merely a breach of Israel's customs. [51] It is no doubt true that the prophets stressed the fact of personal responsibility to God, but is it in keeping with the whole tenor of the Old Testament to say that this was a new stage in the progress of Israel's morality? Could it not have been a call for a revival--a return to a former plane of spirituality which had been lost?

> It is sometimes supposed that Jeremiah and Ezekiel discovered the individual. This is a gross exaggeration. It is true that with Jeremiah and Ezekiel the individual came into much greater prominence, but it is not true that hitherto man had been regarded solely as a member of the community. Nor did these two prophets regard him solely as an individual. With them there came a new emphasis on the individual, rather than a discovery of the individual. [52]

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49 II Kings 14:6; II Chronicles 25:4.

50 Psalms 51:4.

51 Robinson, op. cit., pp. 30, 32f., 51.

52 Rowley, op. cit., p. 210.

It might be concluded, then, that the individual responsibility before God has always been the norm. At no time does the Old Testament conceive of sin as merely the violation of mores; it has always considered sin as an offence against God. God had a special purpose in calling a chosen nation and instituting corporate responsibilities, but even when these were violated it constituted a sin against the God who gave them.

On the other hand, it cannot be denied that there is a stress upon solidarity in the Old Testament. Thus it is valid to ask, "Is the extraction of the individual from the community a real possibility, or is it only an abstraction? Is it not true that the individual apart from society is as meaningless as society apart from the individual?" [53]

To the individualist, social solidarity in the punishment for sin appears to indicate a basic injustice in the character of God. Nevertheless, in natural and inevitable ways children do share in the fruits of their father's sin. Even though a man is punished for his sin, it is undeniable that often poverty and disgrace are meted out to his family as well. Nations also suffer for the misdeeds of the ruler. The humiliation of modern Germany, including many innocent citizens, is a result of Hitler's misdeeds. But "when man

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53 Joseph Fletcher, "Human Nature and Social Action," The Journal of Bible and Religion, XVI (April, 1948), 85.

is recognized to be both an individual and a member of various social units, whose experience he must share," [54] the expression of God acting through the natural consequences of human action is seen not as an expression of vengence, but as an expression of benevolence. The divine beneficence and the involving of the group in the sin of a single member are two sides of the same principle which is founded upon the one and undivided character of God. The very same solidarity which brings evil consequences as the result of sin may also bring incalculable blessings upon the succeeding generations as a result of righteous living. It is illogical to isolate the evils and to ignore the blessings. [55]

Many Biblical scholars, including Robinson, have sought to show that the general Old Testament emphasis was upon corporate being, and that individualistic interests did not receive much attention until later Judaistic and New Testament times. Joseph Fletcher, writing in The Journal of Bible and Religion, has called upon Biblical scholars to make an end of their fallacious either-or arguments in this regard. He points out that throughout the whole Bible the individual is seen in the context of the community; each Testament has its assertion of individual responsibility, and, at the same

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54 Rowley, op. cit., p. 212.

55 Ibid., pp. 212f.

time, each has its Israel or New Israel. [56]

Just as the Hebrew considered man's personality as a unity consisting of an animated body, so he viewed man's individualism and his inextricable involvement in the group as two inseparable aspects of his total life. To have reduced the human situation to either one or the other would have been to make him less than truly human. "The sociality and the individuality of man were therefore held together in the unity of a single view of the nature of man." [57]

II. RABBINICAL SCHOLASTICISM

Williams dates the attempts to formulate a Fall-doctrine in the post-exilic Judaistic period. From reflection on the empirical universality of actual sin arose the suggestion of an inherited taint in human nature. Since the idea of God's goodness forbade the supposition that such a taint was originally created in human nature, some sort of a Fall-doctrine became necessary. Two popular theories arose, both based upon the canonical status and inspired character attributed to Genesis. The first grew out of Genesis 6:1-4, the story of lustful angels consorting with the daughters of men. The Book of Enoch and other apocalyptic

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56 Fletcher, loc. cit.

57 Rowley, op. cit., p. 216.

literature elaborate upon the wickedness which arose from the unnatural mixture of divine and human essences. This particular explanation of the "Fall" was usually discarded in favor of the second, however, since it failed to explain the rise of post-deluvian sin. [58]

Genesis 3:1-24 finally emerged from the competition as the accepted Fall-story. This pre-Christian development of Fall-speculation, anchored in the story of Adam, contributed to the growth of both the idea that human mortality is due to the first sin, and the idea of "original righteousness."

Williams indicated that, while both of these theories, the angel theory and the Adam theory, were popularly held, the official Rabbinical theology did not accept either view. The Rabbis developed an altogether independent theory which did not involve the concept of the Fall at all, in fact, it opposed such speculation. [59]

The problem for the Rabbis was not speculative, rather it was exegetical. The Rabbinical scholastic theory, embodied in the concept of the yecer hara, was based upon Genesis 6:5 and 8:21, "Yahve saw that the wickedness of man was great upon the earth and that every yecer of the thoughts of his

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58 Williams, op. cit., pp. 20-29.

59 Ibid., pp. 53, 56, 60.

heart was only evil every day," and "the yecer of the heart of man is evil from his youth." Some students of Rabbinical literature call attention to the fact that the Rabbis believed in two impulses, one good and the other evil. Often the evil yecer is associated with the body and the good impulse with the spirit. F. C. Porter objects to this dualism attributed to Hebrew thought. He maintains that the question of the "evil imagination" does not apply to the relationship of body and soul to the fact of sin, but seeks to find the relation of God and man to sin. The fundamental proof passages all pronounce the yecer of man's heart evil. This yecer refers to the nature of man as a whole--an evil tendency or disposition which dominates the two equally essential parts of man, both his body and his soul. [60] In fact, the Rabbis dealt chiefly with this evil impulse and rarely mentioned the good. It is hardly conceivable that as important an aspect of man's essential nature as his soul or spirit should hardly be mentioned.

The seat of the good and evil impulses alike is neither in the body nor the soul as distinct from each other, but rather, is in the heart, the inner self of a moral, thinking, and willing person. All sins are attributed to the evil yecer, including not only the bodily sins of lust and passion,

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60 Frank Chamberlin Porter, "The Yecer Hara, A Study in the Jewish Doctrine of Sin," Yale Bicentenary Volume of Biblical and Semetic Studies, 1901, pp. 108f.

but also anger, conceit, and idolatry. [61]

The yecer hara is not to be considered as wholly evil, according to the Rabbis, for even though it may be permitted to become solely self-seeking and sensual, it is none-the-less essential to the very continuance of the world, for it furnishes the drive for all human activity. These evil propensities in human nature are integral and not contingent upon the will; nevertheless, it is the duty of the will to control them and seek to master them by either sublimation or suppression. [62]

The Rabbinical theologians, in their coldly intellectual handling of the Old Testament proof texts apart from all metaphysical considerations involving the goodness of God, felt no hesitancy about attributing the responsibility for the existence of evil to God. [63] They seemed to find no particular difficulty in overlooking the fact that, if God was the author of the evil disposition in man, he must have pronounced it good with the rest of creation; yet it repented him that he had made man or at least that he had made him so. [64]

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61 Ibid., pp. 110-114.

62 Ibid., pp. 115, 125.

63 Williams, op. cit., p. 86.

64 Porter, op. cit., p. 117.

In spite of these difficulties, according to the Rabbis' literal exegesis and their monotheistic view of God, the "evil imagination" must be God's creation. It was noted above, however, that the yecer is not wholly evil at all stages, but is necessary in some sense to all human life and progress. Man's freedom and responsibility is not destroyed according to this view since it is man's moral task to control these impulses of his nature. Moreover, God aided man by also implanting good impulses in his heart and by giving him the Law which will guide him aright if he minutely follows its admonitions. Furthermore, through prayer man may invoke additional aid from God. [65]

This concept of the yecer hara not only differs from the traditional and popular Fall-theories regarding the basis of evil in the human situation, but it also rejects the idea that this psychological basis of sin is hereditary. The Rabbis felt that the yecer hara was "implanted by the Creator in each individual separately at the moment of conception or birth." [66]

In conclusion it is interesting to note, as does Williams, that the Rabbinical concept of the yecer hara has recently been somewhat paralleled by Jung's interpretation

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65 Ibid., p. 133.

66 Williams, op. cit., p. 88.

of the psychoanalytical concept of the libido. [67]

III. NEW TESTAMENT

Regardless of the exact time when the idea of racial solidarity in evil arose, whether it was a well developed view of the Mosaic period, or whether it arose during and after the prophetic period; regardless of the various theories concerning the basis or origin of evil in the human situation, whether it be accounted for by a Fall, or whether it was integral to man's original nature; there can be little doubt that the Old Testament unequivocally portrays the universality of sin and implies the congenital taint of human nature.

Christ and early Christianity had the choice of three views to account for evil in the human race: (1) the angel theory, (2) the Adam theory, and (3) the yecer hara. Williams traces the possible influence of all three in various parts of the New Testament, but the final view adopted by the early Christians and the Church was the Adam theory. Williams tries to explain this phenomenon by showing that the rough Galileans who largely composed the Twelve were probably under the influence of a popular Fall-doctrine rather than the cultural Rabbinical instruction concerning the yecer hara. It made no difference to Christ, according to Williams' interpretation, which view the disciples held; therefore, he said nothing about the origin of sin, but let them choose

whichever theory they found to be the most satisfactory. When St. Paul, the dominating theologian of the early church, became a Christian he came into contact with this Galilean influence and promulgated the Adam theory in connection with the doctrine of Original Sin. His influence raised this theory in standing to that of the official dogma of the church. It should be born in mind, Williams cautions, that even Paul takes no pains to try to prove the Adam theory. He took it for granted in a manner which he could hardly have done unless it was the common intellectual property of all Christians. [68]

Although Christ did not make any specific pronouncement concerning the Fall, it is hard to conceive of the early Christians as merely chancing to fix upon the Adam story. This would seem to imply that the Judaism of Jesus' day also accepted this theory in preference to all others. The fact that Paul could take for granted that his Christian readers and hearers were familiar with the Adam theory, and more, that they accepted it without question, seems proof enough that Christ felt it to be Scriptural. A study of the life of Christ cannot help but give the impression that he was thoroughly familiar with the Old Testament Scriptures and adhered closely to them. His interpretation of them is clear, simple, and literal. As Headlam has pointed out,

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68 Ibid., pp. 116, 118-122.

he took the words of the Old Testament and utilized them as the vehicle for getting across spiritual truths which may not necessarily have been explicit in the Old Testament but were implicit and represented the goal toward which it pointed. [69] Robinson rightly assumes that any new features of Jesus' teaching over Old Testament ideas were due to a redistribution of emphasis rather than any change of content. [70] The very silence of Christ upon the origin of sin would indicate that he was in sympathy with the view held by his followers and felt that no pronouncement was necessary.

What were the central affirmations of Jesus concerning human nature? Ideally speaking, he interpreted human nature in family terms: Fatherhood, sonship, and brotherhood. He conceived of each person as potentially a son of God. [71] Since all men are potentially sons of God, all men are also potentially brothers. Jesus set forth these maxims as the ideal or goal rather than as the point of departure for a study of human nature as it naturally exists. [72] Jesus further taught the priceless worth of human life in the sight of God, [73] which value lies in man's distinctive spiritual

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69 Arthur C. Headlam, The Life and Teachings of Jesus the Christ (London: John Murray of Albermarle Street, W., 1923), p. 129.

70 Robinson, op. cit., p. 78.

71 Luke 6:35; Matthew 5:9, 45.

72 Robinson, op. cit., pp. 78, 82, 87, 91.

73 Mark 8:36, 37.

and moral interests. He continually addressed himself to the inner life of man, and insisted that the only evil which is to be feared comes from within. [74] Thus it may be assumed that Jesus regarded man's true nature to be inward even though he was thoroughly Hebraic in his psychology, insisting upon the unity of the personality. [75]

Christ's reference to the weakness of the flesh even when the spirit is willing [76] cannot be construed to imply a Greek duslism. Jesus never referred to the flesh as evil even though he did intimate that it was a vulnerable spot through which evil might make inroads.

While Jesus had much to say about the ideal character of human nature, the following statement by a modern critic overlooks Christ's equally emphatic pronouncements concerning the natural status of human nature. This critic maintains that, ". . . far from sharing . . . [the] pessimistic estimate of the natural man, [Christ] appeals to him with a confidence that is rooted in a splendid optimism. . . . Human goodness is traced not to the Spirit's supernatural operations, but to the human heart and will." [77] Were this

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74 Mark 7:14-23.

75 Robinson, op. cit., pp. 80ff.

76 Matthew 26:41.

77 W. Morgan, The Religion and Theology of Paul, p. 252ff., cited by James S. Stewart, A Man in Christ (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, n.d.), p. 275.

statement correct, why would Jesus start his ministry by calling on men to repent? [78] Jesus clarifies the true relationship of man to God in the statement of the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner." [79] Christ states that he, himself, came to call sinners. [80] The following positive statements concerning human nature came from the lips of Christ:

> That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All of these evil things come from within, and defile the man. [81]

> Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. [82]

Wiley explains that the usage of the word flesh here refers not only to the physical condition but also implies that man's moral condition is such that a new or spiritual birth is necessary. [83]

Christ's view may be summarized as follows: He ideally conceived of the Fatherhood of God and the sonship as well

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78 Mark 1:15.

79 Luke 18:13.

80 Mark 2:6f.

81 Mark 7:20-23.

82 John 3:5, 6.

83 Wiley, op. cit., p. 99.

as the brotherhood of men. Even though he never made a specific statement concerning the origin of evil, he held sin to be universally present as a fact of human existence. This sin consisted in lawless disobedience against God; an internal state of the heart and will; [84] or, in the last analysis, a broken sonship which can only be restored by a change of attitude in the will of the son from that of disobedience to that of trust and obedience. [85]

The sequel of Christ's keen analysis of man's sinfulness is his recognition also of man's potential salvation through Himself, for "whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." [86] This statement would imply its converse, whosoever does not accept his salvation will be eternally lost.

The question of Christ's view becomes more acute in the light of the controversy over the relationship of the Pauline theology and Christ's teachings. It is maintained by some Biblical scholars that Paul was responsible for changing the whole character of Christianity, or that the New Testament contains not one gospel but two.

Very little space can be devoted in this paper to the

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84 Matthew 7:16; 12:35; 15:19, 20.

85 Robinson, op. cit., pp. 92-98.

86 John 3:15.

controversy just mentioned. James Stewart quotes at length from the Epistles and the Gospels to show how "wide and accurate was Paul's knowledge of the sayings of Jesus . . . . Apart from direct quotations and indirect reminiscences of particular sayings, Paul's fundamental positions and the whole tone and trend of his religious teaching are a legacy from the historic Jesus." [87]

The acts and words of Christ provide the foundation upon which Christianity was built, but he never claimed that his earthly ministry was the final development of Christian revelation. As a matter of fact, Christ clearly stated the need of a further revelation: "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth." [88] Paul might rightfully claim to have received this further illumination upon truth since he lived and wrote in the period after this Spirit had descended upon the followers of Christ.

> After the pouring out of the Spirit at Pentecost the apostles and the church had new insight into the nature and purpose of the ministry of their Lord. . . . Luke says that in the Gospel he had written of the things which Jesus began to do and teach. In the Book of Acts he records what Jesus continued to do and to teach. There is a continuous development in the teach-

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87 Stewart, op. cit., pp. 290f.

88 John 16:12, 13.

ing, and it is all the teaching of Jesus. [89]

Luke, the biographer of St. Paul, therefore indicates that the life and work of Paul was to be considered as the amplification and continuation of the deeds and teachings of Christ. Paul boldly claimed to have received his gospel by a special and direct revelation from Christ himself:

> I make known to you, brethren, as touching the gospel which was preached by me, that it was not after men. For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through the revelation of Jesus Christ. [90]

Any serious student of the New Testament will be forced to conclude that any difference between Paul and Jesus is one of emphasis and not of kind. It is true that Jesus did not claim to be a theologian, but a theology was mandatory for the existence of Christianity. Under the inspiration of the post-Pentecostal guidance of the Holy Spirit, such a theology was forthcoming, expecially in the Pauline epistles.

The famous statement by Augustine referring to the relationship of the Old Testament to the New might well be paraphrased in this case as follows: "Epistula latet in Evangelio, Evangelium patet in Epistula." Paul's theology is latent in Christ's teachings, and Christ's teachings are

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89 D. A. Hayes, Paul and His Epistles (New York: The Methodist Book Concern, 1915), p. 132.

90 Galatians 1:11, 12.

patent in Paul's epistles. [91]

The controversy over St. Paul's psychology demands attention. Was he essentially Hebraic in his view of human nature or was he dualistic? The basis for this question is his constant use of the word "flesh" as antithetical to "spirit". Williams attempts to absolve the Apostle of Platonism by attributing this apparent dualism to his Rabbinical training in the theory of the yecer hara. [92] There are several commentators on Talmudic literature, including Weber and Pfleiderer, who maintain that Rabbinical Scholasticism considered the evil yecer as related to the physique and the good yecer in connection with the soul. Porter, however, insists that the yecer hara spoken of in the Talmud applies to the total personality and cannot be limited to the physical aspects alone. "It must be evident, apart from any positive explanation of Paul's doctrine, that the parallelism between his contrast of spirit and flesh and the rabbinical contrast of the good and evil impulses is remote and insignificant." [93]

Both Williams and Robinson interpret Paul's usage of the term "flesh" as largely relating to the body or physical

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91 Hayes, op. cit., p. 129.

92 Williams, op. cit., pp. 150f.

93 Porter, op. cit., p. 134.

nature. [94] Might not the use of this term be considered a Hebraism just as the heart and many other terms adapted from the body were used to denote various aspects of man's spiritual nature in the Old Testament? Could not the word "flesh" used by Paul be applicable to the total personality in true Hebraic fashion? Since the term was used by one who styled himself a "Hebrew of the Hebrews," an affirmative answer to these questions would not only be permissible but quite logical. Thus Paul's references to the flesh and spirit would not be a distinction between the material and metaphysical, rather, they would be terms applied to two powers directly opposed to each other in both the mind and the body. In other words, the "flesh" includes not only bodily appetites or sensuality, but also self-assertion and hateful impulses. [95]

Robinson feels that nothing was more remote from Paul's thinking than an attempt to attribute the origin of sin in the human race to Adam's Fall. Paul, in his estimation, merely indicated the parallel between Adam's sin and that of each man. Since Robinson assumes that Paul's doctrine of the Fall, properly understood, means that each individual's sinfulness originates through the weakness of his physical nature, he fails to see that Paul took any

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94 Robinson, op. cit., pp. 112, 116, 118; Williams, op. cit., p. 139.

95 Ibid., p. 147.

account of Adam's "original sin." [96] Such a view finds the exegesis of the following verses difficult indeed:

> Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. . . . Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. [97]

> For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. [98]

Did Paul here mean that Adam represents the corporate personality of the race in that universal sinning is a matter of experience? Does he thus deny that men have sinned because of any causal connection with Adam's sin? [99] Historical orthodoxy would answer both of these questions negatively. As has been indicated by Williams, the apostle Paul was the greatest exponent of the Adam theory of the Fall in the primitive church. The simple and literal interpretation of the Pauline epistles does imply a causal relationship between man's sinfulness and Adam's original sin.

Paul positively classes all men, Gentile and Jew alike, as sinners. [100] Since God's wrath is ever directed against

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96 Robinson, loc. cit.

97 Romans 5:12, 14.

98 I Corinthians 15:21, 22.

99 Robinson, op. cit., p. 121.

100 Romans 3:9; 11:32.

sin, all men are under condemnation. [101] The consummation of sin is death. [102] Thus sin and death are sovereign over the whole human race.

Prior to his conversion, Paul was, by his own admission, one of the strictest adherents to the law. The religion of the law was nothing more or less than a religion of redemption by human effort. The law lies before man as a challenge to work toward the moral life and acceptance by God at last, but it throws him back upon his own resources and makes him strain at working out his own salvation. Paul made the discovery that no man can save himself. [103] He states, "For I know that in me . . . dwelleth no good thing;" and ". . . death passed upon all men for that all have sinned." [104] The apostle finally had to cry in despair, ". . . who shall deliver me. . . ." and in the light of the redemptive grace which he had discovered only in the revelation of Jesus Christ on the Damascus road, he could cry in victory, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." [105]

Deliverance is twofold, according to Paul: (1) justification which is salvation from the guilt of sin, and

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101 Romans 3:19.

102 Romans 6:23.

103 Hayes, op. cit., p. 85.

104 Romans 7:18; 5:12.

105 Romans 7:24, 25.

(2) sanctification or salvation from the power of sin. Both of these experiences are beyond man's own reach and are dependent upon Christ's work. Faith is the avenue of access to divine grace as well as its means of appropriation. [106] This faith produces an intimate and real union of personality with Christ. [107]

The foregoing discussion of the Pauline view of human nature can hardly be dismissed without an appended statement concerning the problem of human freedom versus the absoluteness of grace. Paul apparently did little fine speculation in this area. At least, none is recorded. In fact, he gives support to both sides. Romans 8;28 and 29 represent divine grace as absolute and unconditional in its operation within the individual. On the other hand, Paul's missionary enthusiasm and his personal attitude of caution lest he, himself, be rejected after having preached such a lofty gospel [108] would be meaningless aside from the reality of man's freedom. To do violence, therefore, to the practical and ethically minded apostle who never meant to be shackled by hard and fast categories, one might say he came very close to being a metaphysical absolutist, but, at the same

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106 Romans 5;2; 2;20; Ephesians 3;17.

107 Galatians 2;20.

108 I Corinthians 9;27.

time, he implied an adherence to psychological freedom. [109]

In summary, the Pauline view in particular, and the New Testament view in general, may be defined as heavily underscoring man's natural depravity. "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." [110] "There is none righteous, no not one." [111] Even with the aid of the law to act as a schoolmaster as well as a challenge, man is unable to save himself. A redemptive, transforming agency outside of mere human effort is necessary. "Except a man be born 'from above' he cannot see the kingdom of God." [112] It is only through the Atonement provided by Christ's death upon the cross that salvation is possible. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." [113] "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. . . . For the law of the Spirit of life is Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." [114] Thus, the universal degeneracy caused by sin fades into the background as the attention becomes focused on the salvation from sin provided through the Incarnate and Resurrected Christ.

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109 Robinson, op. cit., p. 133.

110 Romans 3:23.

111 Romans 3:10.

112 John 3:3.

113 Acts 16:31.

114 Romans 8:1, 2.

CHAPTER II. CLASSICAL VIEW OF HUMAN NATURE

I. THE SOPHISTS

Greek philosophy began with the primary interest in the objective universe. As it progressed, the place of man in the universe drew more and more attention until by the time of Protagoras (c. 582-497 B. C.) and the Sophists, man was considered as the object of the greatest importance in the universe. The Sophists turned the attention of philosophy away from the objective world and asked important questions concerning the nature, extent, and validity of human knowledge. Protagoras is sometimes known as "The Individualist" in view of his insistence upon relativism and subjectivism in the realm of objective truth and knowledge. "What we call the truth of things is truth relative to each individual beholder; that is true which each beholder subjectively accepts as the truth of the thing which he perceives." [1] Thus the individual man becomes the measure of truth in all of the objective world. Protagoras is credited with having made the classic statement, "Man is the measure of all things."

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1 Paul J. Glenn, The History of Philosophy (St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co., 1929), p. 62.

II. SOCRATES

Socrates thoroughly agreed with the Sophists in turning his interest away from the problems of the universe and toward man. "Man, for Socrates, is the center, the pivot, of all that is worth thinking about." [2] Xenophon recounts Socrates' attitude in this regard in his Memorabilia:

> He did not dispute about the nature of things as most other philosophers disputed, speculating how that which is called by the Sophists the world was produced, and by what necessary laws everything in the heavens is effected, but endeavored to show that those who chose such objects of contemplation were foolish; and used in the first place to inquire of them whether they thought that they already knew sufficient of human affairs, and therefore proceeded to such subjects of meditation, or whether, when they neglected human affairs entirely, and speculated on celestial matters, they thought that they were doing what became them. [3]

Socrates felt that there was something in the universe which could be known absolutely--that something being man. To know thyself was the famous dictum of Socrates which was inscribed on the temple of Delphi. The universe is inexplicable, but a man can and ought to know the meaning and aim of life and the highest good of his own soul. Thus all of Socrates' philosophy culminates in his ethics. The essential

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2 S. E. Frost, Jr., The Basic Teachings of the Great Philosophers (Philadelphia: The Blakiston Company, 1942), p. 59.

3 Xenophon, "Memorabilia," I. 2, 64., quoted by Charles M. Bakewell, Source Book in Ancient Philosophy (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1907), p. 90.

thought behind his whole system is that if a man could be made to think and know more, he will act better, for moral value will ensue in direct proportion to the acquisition of knowledge. [4]

The supreme good of man is happiness which is not dependent upon externals but is grounded in a well-being developed by good action:

> To attain this, man must become godlike in his independence of all external needs; he must become abstemious, for moderation is the cornerstone of all virtue. Yet Socrates, as is evident from the dialogues of Plato, did not carry this doctrine of moderation to the degree of asceticism. . . . To be happy, one must build his happiness not on the perishable things of the external world, but on the enduring goods which are within us, on a mind free from care and devoted to the acquisition of knowledge. For knowledge is virtue. . . . Knowledge is . . . the only virtue and ignorance is the only vice. [5]

This sentiment was good in theory but the beauty of Socrates' lofty ideals was marred by the fact that he descended to the plane of utilitarianism and commonplace mortality when he turned his attention to a particular virtue in practical application. For instance, he advocated the endurance of privation because the hardy man is more healthy, and he taught modesty because no one likes a boastful man. [6]

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4 Alfred Weber, History of Philosophy, with Ralph Barton Perry, Philosophy Since 1860 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925), pp. 45ff.

5 William Turner, History of Philosophy (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1929), p. 83.

6. Loc. cit.

III. CYNICS

Antisthenes, a student of Socrates and a contemporary of Plato, carried some of his teacher's idealistic principles to an extreme. The motto of the Cynic school which Antisthenes founded was; "Virtue for virtue's sake." Socrates held that virtue was the highest good, but Antisthenes maintained that virtue was the only good; all else--riches, honor, freedom, health, etc.,--are indifferent. To assume that pleasure is good is the greatest of all errors. Both Antisthenes and Diogenes of Sinope, an ardent Cynic disciple, were caustic in their attitude toward pleasure seekers;

> And he used continually to say, "I would rather go mad than feel pleasure."
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> He held that those who gave up useless labor and confined themselves to the tasks that nature enjoined, could not fail to live happily. It is our folly alone that makes us unhappy. For the very contempt of pleasure, when one has grown accustomed to it, is itself a source of great pleasure.[7]

Virtue is the rational conduct of life. The aim of life, therefore, must be to be freed from everything which does not lie within the power of the mind. This is accomplished only as all desires which make the world attractive or fearful are suppressed. Only as life has the fewest

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7 From Diogenes Laertius, Younge's translation, p. 217; VI. 70., quoted by Bakewell, op. cit., pp. 146f.

possible wants can it be the most rational and virtuous. [8] In a word, virtue is self-control.

Antisthenes was contemptuous of Plato's doctrine of universals or forms. For him particulars alone are real and the individual man is stripped of all social trappings. In the midst of civilized society, the Cynic attempted to live in a state of nature closely akin to the existence of a savage. It is said that Diogenes wandered about Greece possessing only a beggar's staff and wallet, with no other shelter than a tub. For a while he carried a cup but threw it away when he noticed a child drink from his hands. [9]

This ascetic attitude led to a "back to nature" movement against the conventions of the day and earned for the Cynics the title, "Rousseaus of Antiquity." Virtue consisted in absolute indifference to all externals to the extent that such things as noble birth, honor, riches, marriage, government, and even common decency were made the objects of ridicule. [10] Later the Stoics built upon many of these views, although they rejected the most crude applications of them.

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8 Arthur Kenyon Rogers, A Student's History of Philosophy (revised edition, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1935), p. 73.

9 Ibid., p. 74.

10 Glenn, op. cit., p. 69.

IV. PLATO

Plato believed that man was the highest order of creation, but he felt that the Sophists had gone too far in making him the very center of the universe and the determiner of all truth. Man can only be considered the measure of all things in that his rational powers are able to grasp the nature of the real world. True reality for Plato was the world of ideas or forms. Man is able to transcend mundane matters and contemplate this world of ideas. This ability gives him a unique place in the universe for he is the only creation which can thus transcend himself. The everyday world of sense experience is characterized by instability; everything is in a state of change and eventually perishes. Plato assumes that anything in such a state of flux cannot be genuinely real. Only the forms maintain a constant and eternal stability.

> The forms are eternal by their very nature, and hence constitute the world of true reality. They are sharply distinguished from the transitory things of sense which in contrast with them become mere phenomena --that is, appearances of reality, empty of substance and with no power of self-maintenance. These forms are not revealed to sense-perception . . . [which] is unable to apprehend them. They are visible only to the inward eye of reason, which is the faculty capable of grasping the changeless. [11]

The rational element in man is a part of divine

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11 Edwin A. Burtt, Types of Religious Philosophy (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1939), p. 40.

reason which dwells in a body-prison of matter. Man is good or even divine rationally, but he is forever hampered by a principle of evil which is resident in his material body. Plato's dualism kept him from being too optimistic concerning man, yet he "believed that human reason, by a process of critical and comparative analysis, can establish objective standards in morals and religion." [12] A man is said to live the good life when reason rules the will and all human appetites. Men differ, however, in their capacity to apprehend the forms.

> . . . philosophers only are able to grasp the eternal and unchangeable, and those who wander in the region of the many and the variable are not philosophers . . . . [13]

The average person is incapable of directing his own life; therefore, the proper governmental system would make the rulers to be the philosophers possessing power to enforce the laws of the good life with even private and public worship prescribed by the state. [14]

> Until philosophers are kings, or the kings and princes of this world have the spirit and power of philosophy, and political greatness and wisdom meet in one, and those commoner natures who pursue either to the exclusion of the other are compelled to stand aside,

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12 Ibid., p. 39.

13 Plato, Republic; Book VI (Louise Ropes Loomis, editor, Plato: Five Great Dialogues, Jowett translation, New York, Walter J. Black, 1942), p. 368.

14 Burtt, op. cit., p. 49.

> cities will never have rest from their evils,--no, nor the human race, as I believe,--and then only will this our State have a possibility of life and behold the light of day.[15]

Death is welcome to the philosopher. Plato brings his dualism to a focus at this point. Not until death separates the soul and body can there be any ultimate achievement of the good life. In spite of the heights the philosopher has been able to scale above the rank and file in rational attainments, he is ever hampered by his body. In Phaedo Plato quotes Socrates as he talks with Simmius:

> It has been proved to us by experience that if we would have pure knowledge of anything we must be quit of the body--the soul in herself must behold things in themselves; and then we shall attain the wisdom which we desire, and of which we say that we are lovers; not while we live, but after death; for if while in company with the body, the soul cannot have pure knowledge, one of two things follows--either knowledge is not to be attained at all, or, if at all, after death. For then, and not till then, the soul will be parted from the body and exist in herself alone. In this present life, I reckon that we make the nearest approach to knowledge when we have the least possible intercourse or communion with the body, and are not surfeited with the bodily nature, but keep ourselves pure until the hour when God himself is pleased to release us. And thus having got rid of the foolishness of the body we shall be pure and hold converse with the pure, and know of ourselves the clear light everywhere, which is no other than the light of truth.[16]

In the same dialogue, Socrates tells Cebes of the tragic consequences which overtake the soul who allows her-

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15 Plato, Republic; Book V, Loomis, op. cit., p. 362.

16 Plato, Phaedo, ibid., p. 95f.

self to become polluted with her companion and servant, the body, and consequently, has come to hate, fear, and avoid the intellectual principle. If she is thus impure at death, she can never depart unalloyed but is held fast by a corporeal element. This earthy element drags her down into the visible world where she wanders among the tombs until another body imprisoners her. [17]

This disparagement of matter took a more radical turn in later Neo-Platonism which profoundly influenced Augustine and led to the dualism in Christianity which resulted in the monastic ideal of putting under the evil body by means of ascetic practices in order to develop the spirit.

V. ARISTOTLE

Aristotle, whose science held sway over the medieval mind for centuries, was not quite so pessimistic concerning the material world. He staunchly defended the possibilities of science in protest against the skepticism of the Sophists. As a matter of fact, his main interest was scientific rather than moral or religious. [18]

Aristotle disagreed with Plato's belief that Ideas exist apart from things. Aristotle believed that the Idea

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17 Ibid., p. 116.

18 Burtt, op. cit., p. 50.

exists but that it is inherent or immanent in the thing--in fact, it is the form of the thing, the essence of the particular and indivisible from it. Matter taken by itself is just as untenable. Neither the Idea nor matter can have a separate existence except in abstraction. True reality consists of these taken as a whole, i.e., indivisibly united in the particular.[19] No dualism separates the 'realms' of the universe. Knowledge, therefore, comes not by turning away from sense perception as Plato advocated, but by building upon perception itself.

Man, for Aristotle, is distinguished from, and above, all other creation in that he can partake of the active intellect which is identified with God himself. This reason represents a spark of the divine in man whereby he is able to transcend matter and arrive at some knowledge of the absolute.

In his psychology, Aristotle differed sharply from Plato. In Aristotle's estimation the body is potentiality or capacity while the soul is its energy or function. Matter often resists the efforts of form to accomplish its highest aims and to this extent it can be said to be evil. It is quite obvious, however, that this is a wide departure from Plato's view of matter as intrinsically evil. ". . . the

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19 Weber, Perry, op. cit., p. 81.

soul is the entelechy or primary function of an organized body, and its manifestations or effects are the secondary functions or energies of this body." [20]

The intellect has a mortal part in addition to its divine element. This mortal part is comprised of the ideas which are determined by bodily impressions or that which it passively receives and does not create. Only the active intelligence or pure reason is capable of conceiving the universal and divine. This separate active intellect is an actual being and an absolute principle which is eternal, imperishable, impassive, and immaterial. Thus it takes part in the very nature of God himself. God is the only exception to the rule that every being is both idea and matter, soul and body, for he is pure form, idea, or thought, existing apart from matter. [21] Aristotle gives his view of the nature of God as follows:

> . . . actuality, rather than potentiality, seems to be the divine feature in thought, and the act of contemplation is what is most of all pleasant and best. If then God is always in that happy state in which we sometimes are, this is wonderful; and if in a still more happy state, more wonderful still. And God is in that happier state. Life also belongs to God, for thought as actuality is life, and God is that actuality. And God's essential actuality is life most good and everlasting. We say then that God is a living being, eternal, most

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20 Ibid., p. 96.

21 Ibid., pp. 96f.

good.[22]

It is difficult to discover just what Aristotle meant by the active intellect. The only logical conclusion is the one already mentioned--to identify it with the absolute nous or God. This presence of the nous would make man an intermediate being between the animal and God. In sensibility, perception, and memory, the human soul resembles the animal, but in reason it is Godlike. It is in this duality that man is constituted as a moral being. This morality is the distinguishing characteristic of human nature for the animal that is devoid of intellect could not possibly be moral nor could God who is pure thought.[23]

The good life, therefore, consists neither in a completely one-sided development of animal functions nor in the impossible attempt to become pure thought or God, but in a harmonious co-operation and expansion of the dual essence. The summum bonum of human life is to attain happiness which means to be virtuous. The following quotation from the Metaphysics emphasizes this:

> We may safely then define a happy man as one who is active in accord with perfect virtue and adequately furnished with external goods. . . . Inasmuch as happiness is an activity of soul in accordance with

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22 Aristotle, Metaphysics: Book XII (Louise Ropes Loomis, editor, Aristotle: On Man In The Universe, New York, Walter J. Black, 1943), p. 35.

23 Weber and Perry, op. cit., pp. 97ff.

> perfect virtue, we must now consider virtue. . . . By human virtue or excellence we mean not an activity of the body, but that of the soul, and by happiness we mean an activity of the soul . . . . we call some virtues intellectual and others moral.[24]

Moral virtue is an established habit of the faculty of choice, consisting in a mean which is both suitable to human nature and fixed by reason between excess and defect. Aristotle states his case in the following manner:

> Virtue then is a state of deliberate moral purpose, consisting in a mean relative to ourselves, the mean being determined by reason, or as a prudent man would determine it. It is a mean, firstly, as lying between two vices, the vice of excess on the one hand, and the vice of deficiency on the other, and secondly, because, whereas the vices either fall short of or go beyond what is right in emotion and action, virtue discovers and chooses the mean. Accordingly, virtue, if regarded in its essence or theoretical definition, is a mean, though, if regarded from the point of view of what is best and most excellent, it is an extreme.[25]

In this respect also Aristotle departed from Plato who held that virtue was the complete opposite of vice. Take, for instance; the vice cowardice. Plato would have said to go to the opposite extreme to find the corresponding virtue. Aristotle would say that the opposite extreme would be rashness which is also a vice. The virtue is found to be courage --the mean between cowardice and rashness. The quest for life is thus the search for the "golden mean" or virtue. The intellectual virtues are limited to the perfections of

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24 Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics: Book I, Loomis, op. cit., pp. 98ff.

25 Ibid., Book II, p. 109.

the intellect itself aside from any other faculties. Aristotle made this latter virtue superior to the former or ethical virtue. [26]

In spite of the apparent divergence between Plato and Aristotle, when the question is asked, "What is the essence, aim, or destiny of the human soul?", both answer in the same way but by different approaches. Plato regarded thought as the essence and end of the soul and Aristotle's theology resolves itself after all into an exaltation of the nous. [27]

VI. STOICS

The Stoics were anti-dualistic and rejected Plato's view of the separate Idea even more emphatically than Aristotle had done. They held that ideas have no objective existence whatsoever, either outside of things, as Plato taught, or in things, as Aristotle believed. The Stoic metaphysics followed a thoroughly monistic view.

According to the Stoic there can be no pure spirit such as the active intelligence and God as advocated by Aristotle. God, to the Stoic, has a body and this world of matter comprises that body. This doctrine results in a com-

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26 Turner, op. cit., pp. 154f.

27 Weber and Perry, op. cit., p. 101.

promise between pantheism and theism. "God is identical with the universe, but this universe is a real being, a living God who has a knowledge of things, who governs our destinies, who loves us, and desires our good, without, however, participating in human passions." [28] The universe is conceived as an organic whole which is controlled by a rational "spirit" which is itself a subtile type of matter. Reality and corporeality are synonymous; therefore, speaking from the standpoint of strict logic, God, the universe, soul and body can only be matter and the whole system is basically materialistic. There does seem to be some distinction, however, in the relationship they bear to each other. [29]

To the Stoic there is no separate mind and body. These names represent two aspects of the same reality of which mind is the active element and body the passive element. The human body is a fragment of universal matter and the soul emanates from the world soul. Man is a replica in miniature of the universe, in other words, and partakes of the very nature of God. Note the words of Epictetus in this regard:

> You are a distinct portion of the essence of God, and contain a certain part of him in yourself. . . . You carry a God about with you, poor wretch, and know nothing of it. Do you suppose I mean some external god

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28 Ibid., p. 108.

29 Burtt, op. cit., p. 58.

> made of gold or silver? It is within yourself that you carry him; and you do not observe that you profane him by impure thoughts and unclean actions.[30]

"Since God is reason, all things that happen must fall into a rational order and be conceived as necessary parts of it; nothing occurs by chance."[31] Thus the appropriate attitude of man, who partakes of the very nature of God and the world, is to accept willingly whatever might come, completely confident that it is a part of an all-controlling divine purpose. Indeed, this is the only attitude for man to take since his soul is subject to the necessity which divine law imposes on all things, and to this extent it cannot be free to do other than accept it. "The soul is in no sense free, unless it be said to be free because the necessity by which it is ruled comes from its own nature rather than by anything external to it."[32] Everything in nature obeys this inevitable law, and man, who possesses reason is distinguished from the rest of nature only because he can know these laws which he must obey. As a matter of fact, since he is in a sense divine he is under greater compunction to obey. Contemplation is not the highest purpose of human life. The highest purpose is to act in full

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30 Epictetus, Discourses and Enchiridion (New York: Walter J. Black, 1944), p. 104.

31 Burtt, op. cit., p. 59.

32 Turner, op. cit., p. 170.

accordance with the universal laws of nature and the will of Deity. This is man's happiness, chief good, and end. [33]

Marcus Aurelius has concisely stated a Stoic philosophy of life in his famous Meditations:

> What then is there which can guide a man? One thing and only one, philosophy. Now this consists in keeping the divinity within us free from violence and unharmed, superior to pain and pleasure, doing nothing without a purpose, nor yet falsely and with hypocrisy, not feeling the need of another man's doing or not doing something; and, furthermore, accepting all that happens and all that is allotted us, as coming from the source, wherever it is, whence it itself came; and, finally, waiting for death with a cheerful mind, since it is nothing but a dissolving of the elements of which each living being is composed. . . . For it is as nature wills it, and nothing is evil which nature wills. [34]

This action in accordance with nature constitutes virtue which is not merely a good, but the only good. As such it is to be sought for its own sake, i.e., virtue for virtue's sake, for it contains its own reward. Vice, therefore, is living out of harmony with nature as interpreted in the Stoic manner. Both virtue and vice are essentially one; that is, if a person possesses one virtue he must be wholly virtuous, and conversely, he who is guilty of so much as one vice is guilty of them all. [35]

The Stoics were forced to admit, however, that virtue,

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33 Ibid., pp. 171f.

34 Marcus Aurelius, "Meditations," Marcus Aurelius And His Times (New York: Walter J. Black, 1945), p. 25.

35 Turner, loc. cit.,

like true knowledge, was theoretically attainable but a practical impossibility. They did maintain, nevertheless, the dignity of reason and thus continued the emphasis of both Plato and Aristotle. In a chapter entitled, "What Is the Essence of the Good?", taken from the Discourses, Epictetus apotheosizes reason:

> God is beneficial. Good is also beneficial. It would seem, then, that where the essence of God is, there too is the essence of good. What then is the essence of God--flesh? By no means. An estate? Fame? By no means. Intelligence? Knowledge? Right reason? Certainly. Here, then, without more ado, seek the essence of good.[36]

VII. SUMMARY

Out of these variations of thought a few generalizations may be drawn which are representative of most of the classical view. In the first place, man is to be understood primarily from his rational faculties. This cannot be underscored too heavily! In most instances, this faculty is identified with God, and man, who is a possessor of reason, can be identified to that extent with the Divine. Both Plato and Aristotle sharply distinguish mind from matter. Virtue is nearly always connected with knowledge, rational choices, rational conduct, ideas or forms, active intelligence or the nous, or some other aspect of the mind or soul.

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36 Epictetus, op. cit., p. 103.

Matter is identified with evil to a greater or lesser degree in almost all the systems reviewed except the Stoic which considered the soul, however, to be a more subtle type of matter than the body. This dualism leads to identifying evil with the physical body and goodness with mind or spirit.

VIII. NEO-PLATONISM

Although the system of Plotinus or Neo-Platonism contributed very little to what may be called the classical or Graeco-Roman view of human nature, its significance in the later history of Christian thought would warrant the following post-script to this section.

God is conceived in Neo-Platonism as the eternal One whose perfection is absolute. The material world of limitation and imperfection is not created nor does it evolve out of its own elements; rather, it is to be explained as an emanation from the divine nature. In this pantheistic system the human soul is regarded as a part of this divine overflow from the World Soul, and is further regarded as a defective image of the divine intelligence from which it has emanated. The lowest level away from God is pure matter which is the principle of evil in the universe by virtue of its default of all positive character. Evil is thus pure privation and emptiness.[37] Such a view which denies

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[37] Burtt, op. cit., pp. 63f.

the existence of evil in any real sense was difficult to translate later into Christian theology.

At one time the soul's gaze was fixed on the good, eternal forms, and God. It shifted its attention, however, through weariness or self-will toward matter. This was its fall and it has been entangled with evil ever since. Henceforth it was shackled by the body even though it still retains the faculty of reason--an original endowment by which it is capable of turning back toward pure thought and God. To achieve this return, the soul must be purified by a complete renunciation of all sensuality in order to again contemplate the eternal forms and eventually be reabsorbed into the perfect Unity or God. [38] For the soul which fails to go through the proper process of catharsis whereby the shackles of sense are broken and the soul is enabled to begin its trip back to God, a penalty awaits in the form of future existences in which it is still imprisoned in matter.

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38 Loc. cit.

CHAPTER III. FIFTH CENTURY CONTROVERSY

No figure in the history of the church has been of greater influence than was Aurelius Augustine (354-430 A.D.), who filled the horizon of early church thought. He had a tempestuous and passionate nature which continually overruled his mighty intellect and resulted in excesses and irregularities in his youth. Despite this fault, he was a noble soul whose intense longing after truth and life cannot help but be admired. "In Augustine there were two natures, one passionate and sensuous, the other eagerly high minded and truth seeking." [1] McGiffert characterizes Augustine as the possessor of great intellectual gifts coupled with a vivid emotional nature plus a profoundly religious temperament. [2]

At the age of eighteen or nineteen, he read Cicero's Hortensius and a love for philosophy was kindled within him which never ceased until his death. Years after this intellectual "conversion," he revealed that at this time he was convinced that happiness was chiefly the result of the pursuit of wisdom which demanded contempt for wealth and worldly pleasure and called for a rooting out or rigid control of bodily passion. It was not until his religious

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1 Williston Walker, A History of the Christian Church (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1942), p. 176.

2 Arthur Cushman McGiffert, A History of Christian Thought (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1933), II, p. 72.

conversion, however, that Augustine was able to put this world-renouncing sentiment into practice. There can be little doubt that he adhered to these youthful convictions until the end of his life. [3]

Augustine started to read the Scriptures after Cicero had stimulated him to new study, but the Bible seemed unworthy in comparison to Hortensius. He then turned to Manichaeism for spiritual and intellectual comfort.

Although Manichaeism was syncretistic, dualistic, and essentially Persian, it had acquired some Christian elements by the time it was carried as far West as Rome. In this system it was felt that all things are composed of two fundamental principles. One is good, spirit, light, God; the other is evil, matter, darkness, Satan. The world is a mixture of both of these elements, as is man who is made of a rational and pure soul in conjunction with an irrational and sensual body. These two parts of man are in constant warfare, and the fate of the person after death depends upon whether the good part conquers the evil body or vice versa. In the latter case, the soul is subject to transmigrations in which it has another chance to achieve the victory over the body. Thus the chief aim in life or the highest good is to become liberated from the control of the body. This

3 Ibid., p. 73.

is accomplished by contemplation and bodily denial. [4] When Manichaeism came into contact with Christianity, Christ was added to the system as the great light who illuminates the path to release from the shackles of matter. For nine years Augustine adhered to these beliefs in part at least. Newman lays the blame for his regarding human nature as fundamentally evil, and human freedom as delusion, to this association with Manichaeism. [5]

At the end of this nine year period, Augustine became disillusioned by the lack of mental acumen displayed by the Manichaean leader, Faustus. He returned to Rome and was greatly influenced by the Christian bishop, Ambrose, who was destined to become his spiritual and theological father. In the meantime, Augustine was introduced to Neo-Platonism through the translations of Victorinus. This new idealistic system soon became nearly an obsession with him. The materialism and dualism of Manichaeism were replaced by the view that the spiritual world whose source is God is the only real. Reality must, therefore, be good and evil cannot have a positive existence but is only the lack of good or an alienation of the will of God. This new philosophy deeply

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4 Paul J. Glenn, The History of Philosophy (St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co., 1929), pp. 124f.

5 Albert Henry Newman, A Manual of Church History (revised and enlarged edition, Philadelphia: The American Baptist Publication Society, 1933), I, 362.

colored the whole of Augustine's thought and was utilized by him in later Christian teaching whenever possible. [6]

About the time Augustine embraced Neo-Platonism, he became painfully aware of the gulf between his conduct and his ideals. This conflict grew until it precipitated a crisis in his religious experience. Then it was that salvation came in the form of a sudden conversion accompanied by a fundamental Christian transformation of nature. This was the year 386. For the next thirty years, more or less, he developed his system which was to become so obnexious to Pelagius and his followers.

A deep mystery shrouds the life of Pelagius. Like a missle falling into the theological pool with a loud splash and quickly sinking from view but leaving an endless succession of ripples on the surface, he suddenly appeared, became involved in one of the most heated controversies of the church, and quietly slipped from view leaving in his wake the ebb and flow of a philosophy which cannot credit him as originator but as a staunch proponent. From antiquity to the present, to a greater or lesser degree, the anthropological problem in terms of humanism has waxed and waned, but never has another person precipitated such a crisis as to lend his name to the whole controversy as did Pelagius, with the exception of Sozzini (1525).

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6 Walker, op. cit., pp. 176f.

Much in Pelagianism, it is true, cannot be credited to Pelagius but actually misrepresents his personal view and must be charged to the account of Caelestius and Julian of Eclanum, two later disciples and ardent protagonists of the doctrine. The major tenets of that doctrine, however, were resident in his personal beliefs, and had he been more antagonistic or systematic about them, no doubt the result would not have been far from that achieved by his followers.

By 400 A. D., Pelagius began to play a prominent role in church history, coming into prominence while residing in Rome. From all indications, he seems to have been well along in years by this time, probably over fifty. He was the possessor of a cold, even temperament which found no difficulty in adhering to an abstemious life, and his demeanor commanded the attention and respect of even his most bitter foes. The ease with which he maintained self-control and the resultant purity of his life were striking characteristics. His excellent repute and great moral earnestness drew the admiration of none other than Augustine himself who referred to him as vir sanctus, "a saintly man," during this early part of his public life. [7] He was a monk who practiced asceticism, but he was not connected with any monastery nor did he hold an ecclesiastical position, for both Orosius

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[7] Joseph Pohle, "Pelagius and Pelagianism," The Catholic Encyclopedia XI, 604.

and Pope Zosimus refer to him as a layman. [8]

Augustine wrote his famous Confessions about 400 A.D. It is said that Pelagius was shocked beyond measure when he read of the profligate life which had been Augustine's during his youth. This monk who knew little of such an inner struggle found it difficult to believe that anyone could be so hot-blooded and possess a temperament which found self-control so nearly impossible. The Confessions did not, however, give rise to the doctrines subscribed to by Pelagius for both Augustine and Pelagius developed their doctrines independent of each other. When the controversy did finally arise, the two systems were already well founded and needed only to be clarified and organized. [9]

The Rome in which Pelagius lived was nearing the last stages of decline, and moral conditions were at a very low ebb. He was shocked by the extremely low standards he met on every hand, and he labored earnestly to secure more strenuous ethical standards. He was aroused to anger, a very unusual thing for Pelagius, by the inert Christianity he found on every hand. Although the controversy came a decade later, he was found at this time vigorously opposing the narcotic effect which was produced by the views of

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8 Loc. cit.

9 Adolph Harnack, History of Dogma (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1899-1901), V, 168.

Tertullian, Ambrose, and Augustine on original sin. The Confessions were made the basis of the claim by many Christians that nothing could be done toward improvement because of the frailty of the flesh and the impossibility of fulfilling God's grievous commands. Especially did Pelagius take exception to the statement: "My whole hope is only in Thy exceeding great mercy. Give what Thou commandest, and command what Thou wilt." [10] He felt that the result was a lack of courage to face problems with initiative because it led to too great a dependence upon God and the church. He prepared a book entitled, Eulogios, which was disguised counterattack against the Confessions. It was composed of extracts from Scripture which emphasize the strength and freedom of the will. [11] Pelagius adhered to the popular Stoic ethic, "If I ought, I can," [12] and felt that the laxity in morals so prevalent was not due to depravation or the moral inability of man, but to a lack of a sense of personal responsibility. [13] Thus, while Augustine was in-

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10 Augustine, "Confessions," 10:29, cited by Phillip Schaff, History of the Christian Church (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910-1914), III, 790.

11 R. G. Parsons, "Pelagianism and Semi-Pelagianism," James Hastings, editor, Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, IX, 795.

12 Walker, op. cit., p. 185.

13 Wilder R. Reynolds, The Human Problem (Berne, Indiana: Economy Printing Concern, n.d.), p. 11.

fluenced by the mysticism of Neo-Platonism, Pelagius was molded by this older moral, rational, and popular philosophy, Stoicism.

In proclaiming a vigorous, practical Christianity, Pelagius thrilled the vivacious and highly emotional populace of Italy. He did not meet opposition in his early crusade for improving the moral conditions in the local community, for although all evidence indicates that what he advocated as early as 410 was essentially the same as what later received the label, "Pelagian heresy," he was not accused of heterodoxy until later. As a matter of fact, it is altogether possible that the whole controversy might not have come to the surface at this particular time and in association with his name at all had it not been that Pelagius won a convert to his doctrines in the person of Caelestius, a eunuch of noble descent. Caelestius was a brilliant and keen thinker, but his bold and shocking statements were to be more than once a source of embarrassment to his peace-loving theological father. Julian, the young bishop of Eclanum, must also be taken into account if a true picture of Pelagianism is to be seen. Seeberg points out that these three men present a progressive development of thought. Pelagius laid the foundation with his practical ideas, Caelestius gave to these ideas a doctrinal formulation and Julian, the keen witted but fundamentally rationalistic disputant, carried

the whole system to its logical and rational conclusions. Under the polemic leadership of Julian, the Pelagian side of the controversy became very nearly secularized. [14]

Although beneath the surface of things a deep undercurrent of opposing doctrines must have been keenly felt for some time, the whole controversy did not flare up into the open until the question of infant baptism became an acute issue with the resulting condemnation of Caelestius by the synod of Carthage, 412. The issue at stake was superficially that of pedobaptism but the underlying cause was the Pelagian view of Original Sin. It is difficult to determine just how much of this initial conflict over baptism was really the true view of Pelagius and how much of it was the invention of Caelestius. In all probability, Pelagius thought it unnecessary to baptize children before they could be admitted to eternal life, but he advocated the practice because he thought it was a beautiful rite and had aesthetic value.

The real issues then, were the doctrines concerning the nature of man. The anthropological problem has always been with the church but it had never before been the dominant question as it was during the early part of the fifth century. Previous controversies dealt with such problems as the Trinity (Nicene Creed of 325), nature of the Holy

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14 Reinhold Seeberg, Text-Book of the History of Doctrine (revised and volumes combined, Philadelphia: The United Lutheran Publication House, 1905), pp. 332f.

Spirit (Council of Constantinople in 451). It was inevitable that sooner or later the course of thought would be focused on man himself.

Any real doctrine of original sin was unformulated in the Eastern Church from whence Pelagius drew his greatest support and whose pattern of thinking he followed. As a reaction against fatalism, the Greeks overemphasized the freedom of the will and moral power in many instances. The major emphasis, however, was upon the intellect; the will was regarded as the organ through which reason became operative. This would lead to the conclusion that whatever a man thinks he is also able to will, and, consequently, to do. [15] Although Irenaeus expressed a belief in original sin, his voice was disregarded in this particular by the overwhelming rejection of this doctrine by such luminaries as Athanasius, Gregory of Nyssa, Cyril of Alexandria, and almost all of the other spokesmen for the East. Clement of Alexandria is quoted as saying, "We baptize the children, although they have no sin," [16] and Chrysostom insisted that man's separate acts might be evil but he did not have an evil habitus. [17] As to views of sinlessness, Justin and

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15 Seeberg, op. cit., p. 328.

16 J. L. Neve, A History of Christian Thought (Philadelphia: The Muhlenberg Press, 1946), I, 138.

17 Seeberg, loc. cit.

Athanasius both held to the view that it is the Christian's duty to live sinlessly after baptism, intimating that this could be accomplished by willing.[18] Yet it should be carefully noted that the Greeks were not thorough-going Pelagians for they felt that the will had been weakened by the fall and grace was necessary to salvation. Still they felt that man's state was one of moral infirmity and not a radical corruption which entailed guilt. The Eastern anthropology ascribed to man some measure of ability to meet divine demands, and it made salvation to be the result of man's initial willing and God's bestowal of grace as a result of the faith thus manifested. Kahnis summarizes the Greek position in his Dogmatik as follows:

> We may regard as common to the Cappadocian fathers, Chrysostom, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Cyril of Alexandria, and other Greek fathers of this time, the teaching that through Adam's sin death has come upon all men, together with a predominance of the sensuous nature, still without the loss of the power for good which lies in the reason and the free will, in virtue of which man, with the assistance of divine grace, can lay hold upon salvation, and strive after moral perfection.[19]

This view would have been discarded by both Pelagius and Augustine; it lies very near to the later Semi-Pelagian position.

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18 Friedrich Loofs, "Pelagius, Pelagian Controversies," The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, VIII, 439.

19 Kahnis, "Dogmatik," quoted by Henry C. Sheldon, History of Christian Doctrine (fourth edition, New York: Eaton and Mains, 1906), I, 227f.

The Latin church made a much more positive assertion concerning the connection of Adam's sin and the resultant moral condition of the human race. Since the time of Tertullian there had been current in the West the opinion that the guilt of Adam was entailed upon all of his posterity, and that this guilt was the cause of the sinfulness of the race. Tertullian was an advocate of Traducianism which holds that the "individual soul consists of a human substance . . . which comes into existence with the body in and through generation as a transmission from the seed of Adam." [20] This opened the doors to the doctrine of inherited sin. Hilary taught that the whole race went astray in the fall of Adam, and wickedness grows out of this common origin. A person can only be separated from this origin through baptism. [21] Ambrose re-echoed both Hilary and Tertullian even more forcefully. He claimed that all mankind fell, was ejected from paradise, and died in Adam. He distinguished between the propagation of this primal sin and the imputation of it. The latter or moral responsibility for original sin he rejected, but recognized the former or physical transmission if it. [22] He claimed that an infant a day old is a sinner; yes, it is even a sinner prior to birth. These

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20 Neve, op. cit., p. 139.

21 Sheldon, op. cit., p. 228.

22 Seeberg, op. cit., p. 329.

Latin predecessors of Augustine felt, nevertheless, that fallen man had some small measure of moral ability and could act with God in his salvation provided God took the initiative. Before the Pelagian controversy sharpened Augustine's attack in this realm, it was evident that he did not disagree with this position. [23] The doctrine of grace was vague and poorly defined in both the East and West. Among the Greeks there could hardly be found a trace of dogma concerning grace, and the Latin church recognized only a type of grace which was a sort of assistance to salvation and this quite gratuitous. It was through the impetus of the Pelagian controversy that Augustine and the church finally clarified the doctrines of original sin, free will, and grace.

Pelagianism is predicated upon individualism; racial solidarity plays very little part in its tenets. Each person is considered morally independent, so how could there be any transmission of evil aside from mere example? Even before he was considered heretical, Pelagius denied the possibility of original sin since he held to this atomic view of human nature. He advocated the Creationist view of the origin of the soul. According to this school of thought, the body is considered the only part of man which is transmissible by natural generation. God then creates each individual soul and infuses it directly into this body. Applied to the

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23 Sheldon, op. cit., p. 229.

Pelagian system, this view limits the inheritance from Adam to the body. The goodness and righteousness of God are undeniable attributes; therefore, all of God's creatures and institutions must be good, and there can be no "natural" sins for human nature itself is good. [24] Even the flesh or body ultimately comes from God and must be good also. Death cannot be considered as a consequence of sin, for Adam was created mortal and subject to natural death. Each person is born just as pure and perfect as Adam was originally created.

This leads to the question concerning man's original state and involves the Pelagian view of the "image of God" in Adam. Since the image of God was mentioned in connection with man's dominion over the creatures of the earth in Genesis 1:26, rationalistic Pelagianism maintained that the term, image of God, was used merely to indicate that man is the lord of creation. Pelagius distinguished between the "image" of God which is limited to man's natural constitution, and the "likeness" which refers to his moral nature. Man was not created as the possessor of a primitive holiness or with a natural bent toward good. Pelagius held that he was created morally neutral, with only the possibility of attaining such holiness. [25] Each man has the same "natural holiness"

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24 Harnack, op. cit., p. 196.

25 H. Orton Wiley, Christian Theology (Kansas City, Missouri, Beacon Hill Press, 1940-1943), II, pp. 31, 39.

or freedom and reason as Adam received. Man is capable, consequently, of living just as sinlessly today as it would have been possible for Adam to have done. The only difference lies in the environment of sinful predecessors which now influences man toward evil in a way that Adam knew nothing about. [26] God has commanded man to do good, and he could not be a just or a good God unless he knew that man had the ability to obey his commands. This is but another way of saying that man is free. The absolute freedom of the human will is one of the most fundamental of Pelagius' principles. Freedom is constituted in man's essential nature and is accordingly inamissible. [27] The chief glory of man is his reason plus this freedom. Sin is choosing that which reason says is not righteous. Free will, when made absolute in the Pelagian manner, renders man practically independent of God if carried to its logical conclusion. [28]

When a man sins it is not the fault of nature but a fault of the will, since the inheritance of sin is absolutely impossible and there are no sinful natures or characters. Sin is not a thing; it is an act of the will. Each person has the ability to do either good or evil so that each sin is his voluntary decision and could be avoided. Note the

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26 Parsons, op. cit., p. 107.

27 Seeberg, op. cit., p. 333.

28 Parsons, loc. cit.

following passage from Pelagius himself,

> Nothing good and nothing evil, on account of which we are deemed either laudable or blameworthy, is born with us, but is done by us; for we are born not fully developed, but with a capacity for either conduct; we are formed naturally without either virtue or vice. [29]

It is up to each individual, therefore, to create his own character and to determine his own destiny. Character does not determine conduct for, no matter what course has been followed in the past nor how evil it may have been, a man may choose at any time to do good and turn right about face in the whole trend of his living. [30]

The desires of the flesh are God's creation and are not to be condemned. They only lead to sin when carried to such excess that the limit of nature is exceeded and reason is disregarded. Sin, rather than being due to an evil nature, "is the result of yielding to one's natural desires which in themselves are innocent but when uncontrolled carry a person too far and lead to transgression." [31] Actual sin may be produced by the snares of the devil and sensual lusts which must be overcome by virginity and continence. The moral strength of man's will, strengthened by asceticism, is

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29 Pelagius, "Denial of Original Sin," from his Pro libero arbi trio ap. Augustine, De peccato originali, cited by B. J. Kidd, editor, Documents Illustrative of the History of the Church (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1938-1941), II, 165.

30 McGiffert, op. cit., p. 127.

31 Loc cit.

capable of producing the highest virtue. [32] Pelagius, therefore, placed some stress upon asceticism and monasticism but always subordinated them to the development of the character by changing one's morals and practicing virtue.

Seeberg well stated the Pelagian attitude toward inherited sin in the following quotation, "Adam's little, childish sin is an act of disobedience which has only temporary significance for him, i.e., until his conversion, and none at all for us." [33] Pelagius was not blind to the world about him, however, and in spite of the above view, he was forced to recognize that the extreme prevalence of sin among men demanded some explanation. This, he explained, is the result of the bad example set by Adam's disobedience. Sin was passed from one man to another, not by propagation, but by imitation. Sin became universal because men imitate the sinfulness which has accumulated on a large scale by the long practice of sinning and the long habit of vices. [34] Pelagius recognized that sin was so powerful as a factor in the human race that he calls it a "necessity," though, of course, he meant by this that it is created by each man for himself. [35] It should be kept in mind, however, that there

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32 Pohle, op. cit., p. 604.

33 Seeberg, op. cit., p. 334.

34 Ibid., p. 335.

35 Loofs, op. cit., p. 439.

is no such thing as a sinner, there are only separate wicked acts, just as men are not sinful, but there are only wicked acts of individual men. [36]

Man is capable of natural goodness. Pelagius maintained, therefore, the possibility and ability to conquer sin without divine grace. The law and the gospel facilitate but are not requirements of salvation. He was even willing to say that some men have possibly attained to salvation without the law or the gospel, including some heathen philosophers who knew nothing of God, but pleased him by virtue of their bonum naturae. [37] In a letter to Demetrias, a noble Roman virgin, he wrote an explanation of his Stoic principles of the unlimited energy of nature. [38]

Pelagius does give some credit for salvation to God. He limits the value of Christ's redemption to instruction and example which Christ threw in as a counterbalance to Adam's wicked example; nevertheless, he feels that God is to be praised for the capacity man possesses to utilize this moral influence:

> Whenever we say a man can live without sin, we also give praise to God by our acknowledgement of the possibility which we have received from Him . . . and there is here no occasion for praising the human agent. [39]

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36 Seeberg, loc. cit.

37 Loofs, op. cit., p. 440.

38 Pohle, op. cit., p. 605.

39 Pelagius, "Denial of Original Sin," cited by Kidd, op. cit., p. 164.

He believed in Christ as both justifier and teacher. Justification is accomplished through the mode of baptism and by faith alone. Walker says that between Paul and Luther no other person so emphasized justification by faith alone.[40] This faith is given to each in so far as each is called by the divine will to believe, which will to believe lies within the free will of each individual. Thus Pelagius strongly commits himself against effectual calling, election, and predestination. By justification, he does not mean an interior renovation or sanctification of soul, but an external cleansing of our personal sins through faith.

Pelagius would not deny the need of grace, although he interpreted the term to suit his system. He declared that grace was not only needed every hour of life, but every moment, and for every separate act a person might perform. Grace is not given as a prerequisite to fulfilling God's commands, but as an aid to fulfilling them. What, then, is grace? There are three types of grace: (1) Creation or man's native endowment of reason and free will--a part of his natural constitution, (2) the Law, and (3) Christ's works and example as depicted in the gospel.[41] It is bestowed according to each man's independent merits thus providing an equal opportunity for all with favoritism toward none. In the case

40 Walker, op. cit., p. 186.

41 Harnack, op. cit., p. 196.

of Adam and his immediate descendants, the only grace necessary was free will, reason, and conscience; but, as time passed and sinning became a continual practice and a strengthened influence, God saw that added light was necessary. The law and the gospel were thus added to divine grace for their exemplary value. [42] Grace is not an indwelling divine power which boosts the will, but it is external instruction, enlightenment, and example. In summary, therefore, grace may be said to be the overcoming of sin through free will enlightened by reason and the law or the example of Christ. [43]

When a man is regenerated, according to the Pelagian interpretation of the term, he does not experience a new birth or receive a new nature, but simply receives (1) forgiveness for his past sins by way of baptism, (2) illumination of the mind by truth, and (3) a stimulation of the will by the divine promises. [44] Pelagius confused the issue by adhering to these traditional terms--grace, justification, and regeneration--but giving to each an entirely different connotation.

Sins previous to baptism should distress no one. After forgiveness a person is well able to live free from all sin. This is a type of Christian perfection based almost wholly

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42 McGiffert, op. cit., p. 129.

43 Seeberg, op. cit., pp. 336f.

44 McGiffert, loc. cit.

upon man's ability. Any further sin, however, must be atoned for by penance, but Pelagius preferred to emphasize continually the possibility of avoiding this. He thought less of the practice of penance than did most of his contemporaries; in fact, he felt like abolishing the idea because it tended to encourage a too easy yielding to sin. [45]

The following summary taken from Augustine's De gestis Pelagii will serve as a concise recapitulation of the Pelagian tenets already elaborated upon:

> Then follow sundry statements charged against Pelagius, which are said to be found among the opinions of his disciple, Caelestius: how that "Adam was created subject to death, and that he must have died whether he had sinned or not; that Adam's sin hurt only himself and not the human race; that the Law no less than the Gospel leads us to the Kingdom; that there were sinless men previous to the coming of Christ; that new-born infants are in the same condition as Adam was before he fell; that the entire human race does not, on the one hand, die owing to Adam's death and transgression, nor, on the other hand, does the whole human race rise again through the resurrection of Christ." And sundry others: "That a man is able to live without sin if he likes. That rich men, even if they are baptized, unless they renounce and give up all, have, whatever good they may seem to have done, nothing of it reckoned to them; neither can they possess the Kingdom of God. All infants, even if unbaptized, shall inherit eternal life." [46]

The African synod suggested that the secular power in the West, Emperor Honorius, condemn Pelagianism. This he did in a rescript of April 30, 418, which banished all

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45 Ibid., p. 128.

46 Augustine, "De gestis Pelagii," cited by Kidd, op. cit., p. 235.

Pelagians from Italian cities, but not until the Third General Council in Ephesus (431) was Pelagianism universally condemned as heresy by the church both in the West and the East.

Augustine's anthropology stands in bold relief when given perspective against the Pelagian backdrop. When Augustine entered the controversy, especially against Julian, he did not develop his views of human nature, rather he clarified and sharpened the system he already held.

He was convinced that the world of changing things which is revealed to the senses is not truth or reality. Real knowledge comes only by way of reason. The knowledge of the higher world which is apprehended only by reason is not speculative but is certain and immediate. Hence it can be said that the existence of God may be just as surely known as any mathematical law. God is the only real-being because he is unchangeable. As such he constitutes the only reality. Everything else is temporary and, to this extent, not truly real. Since God is reality, he is also the only real good. To be apart from him is to be separated both from reality and goodness. The summum bonum of life is to depend upon God and to cleave to him. It is absurd to talk about independent goodness; in fact, this desire for independence is the root of evil because evil is the privation of good. Anything possessing substance must be good; therefore, evil is

non-being and solely negative. The end result of this view is an extreme divine immanence. Unless men or things are either in God or he in them, they have no real existence. As time went on, Augustine read God more and more in terms of personality until he arrived at the curious combination of philosopher, emphasizing the Absolute being, and theologian, emphasizing the personality of God.[47] As the philosopher it seems undeniable, however, that Greek thought in general and Platonism or Neo-Platonism specifically were important factors in his thinking.

Seeberg points out that his thought moved along two intellectual lines: (1) Voluntarism, for he viewed both man and God in terms of will, will versus Will; and (2) Neo-Platonism which led him to the conclusion that the supreme good or blessedness comes by contemplating the intelligible world as distinct from the temporal world. He felt that there are two great realities, God and the soul. Light, truth, and life are essential to God; while the soul dwells in darkness, misery, and death. It is only as God lays hold of the soul that its vision clears and it has the power to do good. Seeberg further indicates that Augustine was near to pure Platonism when he said that innate in each soul is an "inner sense" which is capable of apprehending the nature of things in their intelligible form. In the true Greek

47 McGiffert, op. cit., pp. 81, 84ff.

spirit, Augustine felt that salvation was the result of God's enabling the soul to contemplate the eternal. [48]

To say, therefore, that Pelagius represented the point of view adhered to by the Greeks, and that Augustine was the champion of the Latin West is greatly to oversimplify the contributing streams of thought in this controversy. In general it might be said, however, that Augustine did receive most of his theological tenets from the West even though his philosophy was tinctured with Greek thought.

Augustine set out to defend human freedom against the Manichaeans immediately after his conversion. Years later, he reflected upon his early Semi-Pelagianism as follows:

> I was led to adopt this line of reasoning and to say: God therefore did not, by foreknowledge, elect a man's works which He himself was to bestow upon him; but by foreknowledge He elected his faith in such a way that, when He foreknew that he would believe in Him, He elected him as one to whom He would give His Holy Spirit in order that, by good works, he might attain to eternal life. I had not then inquired with sufficient care; not had I yet discovered what is the nature of "the election of grace." [49]

It was not long after his conversion, however, that Augustine began to do a bit of introspection regarding his own conversion. This led him to the conviction that man's natural condition renders him incapable of cooperation with divine grace in producing faith sufficient for salvation. Thus much

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48 Seeberg, op. cit., p. 310.

49 Augustine, "Retractationes," cited by Kidd, op. cit., p. 239.

prior to the Pelagian controversy, he came to the conclusion that man is entirely powerless to change his own will, and that grace as well as faith are bestowed solely as gifts from God. Many of these views of sin, grace, and faith were held by Ambrose, and it may be fairly concluded that he was a precursor of Augustine. [50]

Augustine held that Adam was created with princely attributes of wisdom and holiness. He made a distinction between the image and the likeness of God in Adam's original state. The image is man's natural attributes of reason and freedom, while the likeness refers to the moral attributes or original righteousness. Augustine felt that the latter or moral aspect of Adam's creation was a positive holiness which was concreated with, and an original quality of, his being. Pelagius agreed that Adam was created sinless, but, on the other hand, he contended that he was made, not in the possession of holiness, but with the possibility of originating it by subsequent action. [51]

In this original state Adam's will was master over all fleshly impulses. To help and strengthen this there existed a supporting grace or adjutorium which was a bond of union between God and man. With the aid of this adjutorium, Adam could have willed easily to remain sinless;

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50 Neve, op. cit., pp. 143f.

51 Wiley, op. cit., pp. 30f., 40f.

consequently, the fall was all the more a catastrophe which wrought a deserved havoc upon the human race. [52] In his original state, Adam did not need to sin or to die (posse non peccare et non mori) but when he, through the freedom of his will, chose in the wrong direction it was impossible for him not to sin and not to die (non posse non peccare et mori).[53]

Augustine's view of evil grew out of his belief that God created both man and the world ex nihilo. Evil, which is negation or the diminution of being, is explained as the tendency of all things to revert into nothingness. Only the God who created this earth can withstand this lapsing of things. It is only because the divine power is absent that evil can arise. God does not cause evil; he only permits it. Why does God allow evil at all if he is thus able to prevent it? Augustine borrowed an answer from the Stoics who considered the universe as a harmonious whole made up of a variety of diverse parts. Thus Augustine felt that separate evils are seen as good when viewed in this gestalt fashion. God permits evil only for the sake of the total good. Referring to a debate with Fortunatus, a presbyter of the Manichaeans, Augustine said, "And whereas I maintain that the evil in man arises out of his voluntary free will, my opponent endeavors to show that the nature of evil is co-eternal with God. [54]

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52 Harnack, op. cit., pp. 215ff.

53 Neve, op. cit., p. 144.

54 Augustine, op. cit., p. 238.

Evil in man is thus contingent upon free will plus the prineiple of lapsing again into nothingness. Evil tendencies are revealed when a person chooses the lesser instead of the greater. The essence of Adam's sin and all consequent sinning is the choice of self instead of God. [55]

Adam's fall, therefore, grew out of the tension between the love of self and the love for God. By virtue of his free will, Adam chose the former. This resulted in his spiritual death because he severed relations with God. Pride did not merely make him sinful, but it made him a sinner whose crowning glory, reason, became clouded and whose mastery of the soul over the body was reversed. This sin of Adam did not destroy man's freedom to the extent that choice is absolutely gone, but this choice inevitably leads to sin which is all the more tantalising in that there remains in man a powerless desire for good. The positive side of sin is the reign of the devil, pride, and concupiscence over man. Pride indicates that the soul is sinful just as concupiscence shows that the body is sold out to evil. The body, freed from the constraint of the soul aided by the adjutorium, exerts itself in wantonness which corrupts the whole of human nature. This polution of man's nature is manifest in sexual lust. The whole of human nature is thus vitiated and propa-

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55 McGiffert, op. cit., pp. 89f.

gates sin by way of the sensuous act of procreation.[56] All children are born sinners because even in the regenerate the child is begotten by the old man or the sexual act of procreation.[57] The intercourse of the sexes in itself is not sinful, but man being a sinner can generate offspring only in a sinful manner. Briefly, then, the nature of sin is progressively revealed as essentially a love of self resulting in ignorance which culminates in concupiscence and is made hereditary largely through sexual intercourse.

Augustine built upon the premise that the human race as a compact mass or collective body in its unity and solidarity is responsible for this original sin. In Adam's sin the whole race became guilty before God, and on account of this heredity sin, are justly subject to God's condemnation.[58] Augustine employed the graphic expression, "a mass of perdition," to describe the potential sinful race which fell in Adam's act. Men are not sinners by imitation; each is a real sinner as well as guilty because in the sin of Adam the will of the whole race was seminally present and operative.[59] The race is so positively guilty that a new-born child is

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56 Harnack, op. cit., pp. 210ff.

57 Sheldon, op. cit., p. 238.

58 Karl Reinmar Hagenback, A Text-Book of the History of Doctrines (New York: Sheldon and Company, Publishers, 1869), I, 299. Based upon Augustine, De Peccato Orig. c. 13.

59 Seeberg, op. cit., pp. 342f.

included in this condition of sin even though he has never committed an actual sin. Unless the child is baptized, he will be meted out a just eternal punishment should he happen to die in infancy. [60]

Salvation and restoration are made possible only through divine grace. Since man's will is bound to choose evil, a prevenient grace must prepare the soul to enter the initial state of salvation. The following words of Augustine clearly protray this preparatory action by the Holy Spirit:

> We . . . affirm that the human will is so divinely aided in the pursuit of righteousness, that, in addition to the fact of man's being created with a free-will, and besides the doctrine which instructs him how he ought to live, he receives the Holy Ghost, by whose gift there springs up in his mind a delight in, and a love of, that supreme and unchangeable good which is God . . . . A man's free-will, indeed, only avails to induce him to sin, if he knows not the way of truth; and, even after his duty and his proper aim shall begin to become known to him, unless he take delight and feel a love therein, he neither does his duty, nor sets about it, nor effects a righteous life. Now, in order that such a course may engage our affections, God's "love is shed abroad in our hearts" not through the free-will which arises from ourselves, but "through the Holy Ghost which is given us." [61]

Grace not only initiates good in sinful man, but it remains actively influencing man even after his will is liberated.

If evil is a nonentity then grace may be regarded as God's creative act which makes an entity out of this non-being

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60 Neve, op. cit., p. 145.

61 Augustine, "De Spiritu et littera," cited by Kidd, op. cit., pp. 230f.

through a transformation of the evil will by the inbreathing of a good will. The Augustinian doctrine of grace does not imply a personal communion, but it denotes a creative act which becomes effectual as the almighty, creative Will infuses into the human nature a new moral will. In this way, sensual desire is displaced by a desire for God and his will. It is true, however, that concupiscence remains even after a person is baptized and justified, but God arbitrarily no longer accounts it as sin. The good will instilled by the Spirit progressively marks the entire Christian life and keeps concupiscence from gaining the upper hand over the soul. [62]

Harnack summarizes the stages of salvation in the following manner. Prevenient grace, when combined with the effectual call, creates within the elect a good will which in turn opens the way for faith, another gift of God. This faith, which comes by grace, must then develop as (1) unquestioning acceptance of salvation based upon the authority of the Church and the Scriptures, (2) obedience, and (3) trust and belief on and in God; as such it passes into love. As this inner growth of grace takes place there must be a parallel action of visible grace in the Church. This latter effective grace begins in the remission of sins by way of baptism, which act is not justification in itself but opens

62 Seeberg, op. cit., pp. 341, 347ff.

the way for the Holy Spirit to infuse into the heart both love and good will as substitutes for evil desire. This transformation through an endowing with moral power is the proper meaning of justification. The highest and the last gift of grace is the perseverance of the elect in this love until the final Judgment. [63]

It has been shown that Augustine felt that each man inherited depravity and its guilt, and that no human power could bring deliverance. Salvation comes exclusively to those to whom the grace of God is imparted. Grace is both irresistible and predestinating. If grace lays hold of a man he is powerless to resist for God carries out his will in the human situation no less than in the rest of nature. Augustine does not deny the freedom of the will. God does not work salvation against man's will, but through it. Augustine explains this by saying that the will makes its choice freely, but the inclination of the heart determines what it wills to choose. As long as the heart is inclined toward evil, it will not choose the good; but grace changes the heart in a way which makes it impossible for the will to resist choosing good. "Thus we can say: Man is converted, not because he wills, but he wills because he is converted." [64]

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63 Harnack, op. cit., pp. 205f., 209.

64 Neve, op. cit., p. 147.

From the above premise it necessarily follows that God, as a consequence of eternal decrees, without referring to the future conduct of man, elected or predestinated some of the "mass of perdition" to act as vessels of his mercy, and left the remainder to become vessels of his just wrath and condemnation. [65] These unpredestinated will never be effectually called and will inevitably fall into ruin as parts of the masse perditionis even though they might seemingly be good Christians for a season. Augustine was unmistakably clear on these points:

> This is the predestination of the saints . . . to wit, the foreknowledge and the preparation of God's kindnesses, whereby they are most certainly delivered, whoever they are that are delivered. But where are the rest left by the righteous divine judgment except in the mass of ruin where the Tyrians and the Sidonians were left? who, moreover, might have believed if they had seen Christ's wonderful miracles. But since it was not given to them to believe, the means of believing also was denied them. From which fact it appears that some have in their understanding itself a naturally divine gift of intelligence, by which they may be moved to the faith, if they either hear the words or behold the signs fitted for their minds; and yet, if, in the more lofty judgment of God, they are not by the predestination of grace separated from the mass of perdition, neither those very divine words nor deeds are applied to them by which they might believe if only they heard or saw such things. . . . They hear these things and do them to whom it is given; but they do them not, whether they hear or do not hear, to whom it is not given. [66]

To the question why God chooses some to salvation and

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65 Hagenbach, op. cit., pp. 303f.

66 Augustine, "De dono perseverantiae," cited by Kidd, op. cit., pp. 245f.

leaves the rest to their fate, the only answer God gives is, "I so will," to which the creature can only humbly submit. According to this theory there can be no assurance of the gospel, for who can be so presumptuous as to claim to be one of the predestined? [67]

A corollary to the doctrine of predestination is the gift of perseverance. To the elect God gives this gift of perserverng in grace until death and the Judgment. Another quotation from Augustine clarifies this doctrine:

> Therefore, to the first man, who, in that good in which he had been made upright, had received the ability not to sin, was given the aid of perseverance; not that by it, it might come to pass that he should persevere, but because without he could not of free-will presevere. But now to the saints predestinated to the kingdom of God by God's grace, the aid of perseverance that is given is not such as the former, but such that to them perseverance itself is bestowed; not only so that without that gift they cannot persevere, but moreover, so that by means of this gift they cannot help persevering. . . . [68]

The predestinated may even stumble or fall, but not permanently, for God's grace is irresistible in their lives. [69] Hence Augustine does not leave room for <u>real freedom</u> in any metaphysical sense.

A brief summary of Augustine's system may be given as follows: Adam's sin brought physical and moral corruption

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67 Seeberg, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 352.

68 Augustine, "De correptione et gratia," cited by Kidd, <u>op, cit.</u>, p. 243.

69 Neve, <u>loc. cit.</u>

upon human nature. The sin itself was damning but its result was even more so because it has descended upon all men. Mankind, consequently, no longer has any free-will except to choose evil. Out of this corrupted mass of humanity God chose from all eternity that some should be saved through Christ and all the rest should be damned to the perdition that all of them deserved. Forgiveness of sin is effected through baptism but there can be no remedy for the moral corruption of man. To those who are elected to be saved, God sends his grace irresistibly to inspire not only faith but also the wish and the power to do right as well. Those who are not of the elect do not partake of God's grace in any way. Christ may as well have never died as far as their soul's salvation is concerned. They are predestined to eternal damnation. [70]

In addition to these views specifically concerned with human nature, mention should be made of some philosophical tenets. God is the only reality and thus the only real good. All substance is good, therefore, evil is non-being, negative, and deprivation of the good. Consequently, the summum bonum of life is to depend upon God and to cleave to him, for he alone is unchangeable and real-being; everything

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70 J. C. I. Gieseler, Text-book of Ecclesiastical History (n.p.: Carey, Lea, and Blanchard, 1836), I, 223f.

else is temporary. In this respect, salvation may be said to consist of God's enabling the soul to contemplate the eternal, intellible world of reality.

There is one further factor in Pelagius versus Augustine which deserves attention. The psychology of the two men no doubt played a great part in the controversy. Pelagius the cold and even in temperament, in contrast to the hot-blooded Augustine, furnished the hereditary background. This did not determine the contents of the contest, but merely which side of the contest each would take, for it has already been pointed out that the problem had been fermenting in a disorderly fashion through the whole previous history of the church. As to the environmental antecedents it may be said that Pelagius, in the main, represented the theology of the Eastern sector of the Church and Augustine that of the West. Both men were profoundly influenced by Greek thought although through entirely different schools; Pelagius, the Stoic, versus Augustine, the Neo-Platonist. There is no doubt that both parties were driven to extremes which neither intended in the course of the defense of their doctrines; however, this contest did a distinct service to the Church by bringing the anthropological problem to the fore, thus bringing about the circumstances which made a statement of orthodoxy necessary.

CHAPTER IV. SEMI-PELAGIAN POSITION

The Council of Carthage (418) and the later Council of Ephesus (431) condemned Pelagianism through the efforts of the followers of Augustine. Their victory did not mean the victory of Augustinianism, however, nor was the latter ever fully sanctioned by the church. Predestination, man's complete inability to perform good, and irresistible grace were all so foreign to the general thought of the church that the succeeding theology, while looking back upon Augustine as its champion of the faith, glossed over these views.

Jerome (340-420), a contemporary of Augustine, was insistent that Pelagius be condemned, nevertheless, he failed to follow Augustine fully. He was willing to give more credence to the ability of the human will in conversion and flatly refused to accept either Augustine's high predestinarianism or irresistible divine grace. [1] It is singular to note that most of the Semi-Pelagian doctrines were restatements of the views held by Tertullian and Ambrose prior to both Augustine and Jerome. This protest movement arose, therefore, both as a defense of the established doctrines of the church and as a defense of the gospel itself against the novel teachings, "for Semi-Pelagianism was also an evangeli-

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1 Arthur Cushman McGiffert, A History of Christian Thought (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1933), II, p. 135.

cal protest, which grew up on Augustinian piety, against a conception of the same Augustinianism that was intolerable as doctrine." [2]

As early as 420, Vitalis of Carthage, a monk who was anti-Pelagian and who fully recognized the pronouncements of the Synod of Carthage (418), felt that the beginning of faith springs from the free will of nature and that prevenient grace is essentially the preaching of the Christian doctrine of salvation. Augustine gave him some paternal instruction stressing the precedence of grace over faith, which grace must be considered as an interior enlightenment and strengthening that the mere preaching of the Word of God could never produce unassisted. [3]

Not long after Augustine quieted Vitalis, the monastery at Hadrumetum, Egypt, was thrown into chaos as two diverse viewpoints arose when Augustine's doctrine of predestination was pushed to its logical conclusion. One group of monks arrived at a relaxed state of rash confidence and optimism while the remainder became victims of distressed consciences and plunged into a state of hopeless despair. [4]

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2 Adolph Harnack, History of Dogma (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1899-1901), V, 245.

3 Joseph Pohle, "Semipelagianism," The Catholic Encyclopedia VIII, 703.

4 J. L. Neve, A History of Christian Thought (Philadelphia: The Muhlenberg Press, 1946), I, 148.

Augustine wrote two books, De gratia et libero arbitrio and De correptione et gratia, as an endeavor to counteract these practical effects of his doctrines. He forwarded both copies to the monks at Hadrumetum. The first book was an attempt to explain that grace is the only basis for freedom and merit, and it in no sense makes them nugatory. The second volume contained explanations of freedom by grace only, perseverance, and the fixed number of the elect. These works seemed to quiet the agitation in Egypt, but they aroused lukewarm friends to hostility in the monastic circles of Marseilles and Lerins in Gaul, especially in the persons of the Greek trained Gallic monks Johannes Cassianus, a disciple of Chrysostum, and Hillary, the later bishop of Arles. [5]

Cassian and the Massilians held that the doctrine of predestination was new and of no value since it was not in accord with the intuitions of the church, with the teachings of antiquity, or with the opinions of the fathers. It was actually held to be dangerous in that its emphasis upon a completely impotent human will cripples the force of reproof and moral energy as well as paralyzes Christian preaching. Its practical result is to plunge men into despair, and theoretically, it requires either a fatal necessity or a God of two natures. Furthermore, Pelagianism could be very

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5 Friedrich Loofs, "Semipelagianism," The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, X, 347.

successfully refuted without such a doctrine. [6]

The system adhered to by Cassian was thoroughly Augustinian in many other tenets, however, and the name which was later associated with this modified Augustinian group might have been more accurately Semi-Augustinianism rather than Semi-Pelagianism. These Gallic monks maintained that man's primitive state was one of immortality, wisdom and perfected freedom. Adam's fall produced the corruption and inevitable sinfulness of the human race, and none is free to work out his own salvation. But with the free, though weakened, will man still possesses a certain ability to make choices toward the good. The beginnings of good resolutions, thoughts, and faith which are preparatory for grace are to be credited to man's free choice. There is also an internal grace which enlightens, chastens, and sanctifies a man, without which human virtue could never grow or be perfected. Hence divine grace is necessary for final salvation and perfection but is not a necessity in order to start toward salvation. This inner grace must accompany any Christian growth, but it does so only to him who really tries. [7] There is a distinction between the beginning of faith and an increase in faith. The former is the power of free will while

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6 Reinhold Seeberg, Text-Book of the History of Doctrine (revised and volumes combined, Philadelphia: The United Lutheran Publication House, 1905), p. 369.

7 Harnack, op. cit., p. 247.

the latter, or faith itself, is absolutely dependent upon God. [8] On rare occasions God anticipates some men's decisions and first renders them willing, but this action is far from irresistible. Never is the free will abrogated; for the usual order makes grace concomitant to human merit and not prevenient. God earnestly wills universal salvation, and Christ's propitiation provides redemption for all men who will freely accept it. [9] Thus there can be no fixed number of the elect, and, similarly, of the damned. In addition, final perseverance is not a special gift of grace because a man may persevere in his own strength. [10]

In summary it can be said that Cassian held to two great principles of divine grace: (1) Man is unable to do good aside from God's help. (2) The freedom of man's will must be preserved for by it man is able to turn toward the good unassisted. He felt that grace, which may be defined as an intuition through the law plus divine inspiration which illuminates the spirit for a spiritual understanding of the law, and free will cooperate. [11] Augustine's unique contribution, the sola gratia, is thus discarded.

Immediately after the death of Augustine, his under-

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8 Pohle, op. cit., p. 704.

9 Harnack, loc. cit.

10 Pohle, loc. cit.

11 Seeberg, op. cit., p. 370.

study, Prosper, came to the defense of a modified form of Augustinianism. Prosper attempted to absolve Augustine of teaching double-predestinarianism. He said that there is only the one predestination to salvation which must be distinguished from prescience regarding the reprobati. The monks were not convinced, however, and Prosper left Gaul in disgust.

Semi-Pelagianism gained such a hold upon Gallic religious thinking that the monk, Lucidus, was openly accused of heresy for holding to the Augustinian doctrine of predestination. He was twice condemned; by the synods at Arles (473) and Lyons (474). Faustus, bishop of Riez, was asked to deliver a scientific refutation of the condemned heresy. The beliefs thus stated by Faustus became the standard or norm of Semi-Pelagianism. He agreed with neither the "pestiferous doctor Pelagius" nor the error praedestinalionis of Lucidus, but followed in the foot-steps of Cassian. [12] He felt that the extinction of the free will was "erroneous, blasphemous, heathen, fatalistic, and conducive to immortality." [13]

The basic tenets of Faustus are as follows: Original sin and the freedom of the will are not mutually exclusive. All men are born under the curse of original sin for no one

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12 Pohle, op. cit., p. 705.

13 Harnack, op. cit., p. 252.

can deny that man, since the Fall, is inwardly and outwardly corrupt and is incapable of attaining salvation through his own efforts. Yet man did not become completely deprived of his freedom for even though the will is infirm and makes right choices with difficulty, it does not find such decisions impossible. [14] Man can still choose either to obey or to resist grace. The will is one attribute involved in the concept of the image of God in man which cannot be destroyed.

Grace has to reckon with man's infirm will with which it cooperates; otherwise human obedience would be worthless. In fact, the weakened state of the will calls for greater effort and a redoubled striving on man's part to obtain the divine gift of salvation. [15]

There is a distinction between general grace and special grace. The former--original grace or adjutorium--refers to the religious and moral capability with which man is naturally endowed by God; the latter or special grace is Christianity. The operation of Christianity within a man depends upon the manner in which he has utilized general grace. [16] Prevenient grace is nothing more than external

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14 Seeberg, op. cit., p. 375.

15 Johann August Wilhelm Neander, General History of the Christian Religion and Church (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1849), IV, 414.

16 Loc. cit.

preaching--reproof and exhortation--as well as the law.

Faith is knowledge plus the exertion of the will. It is merit which finds support in the above mentioned "natural" grace to which is added redeeming grace. This latter grace then cooperates with the will in producing perfect merit which God rewards with justification. [17] Thus Faustus concludes that each man has implanted within his human nature an imperishable germ of good which is to be cherished, for, with the assistance of divine grace, it becomes operative toward salvation. The truth lies half-way between the two extremes of emphasis upon either the divine or the human agency in salvation. [18]

Years passed, the whole controversy seemed to have died away until an African bishop inadvertently quoted the late Faustus as an authority in opposition to the extreme views of some Scythian monks who were gathered at Constantinople to get a certain phrase included in the Christological formula of the Council of Chalcedon (519). The Scythians retorted by calling Faustus a Pelagian whose authority was of no consequence. Thus aroused, the Scythians went to Pope Hormisdas in Rome and demanded that Faustus' doctrinal position be declared heretical. Their immediate mission failed, but the interest thus engendered in the problem was

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17 Harnack, op. cit., pp. 235f.

18 Neander, op. cit., p. 415.

eventually to affect Caesarius who brought the issue to its final climax. [19]

Fulgentius, at the instigation of the Scythians, championed the Augustinian cause. In his two works, Seven Books About Faustus and De veritate praedestinationis et gratiae dei, he expounded the Augustinian doctrine of predestination to salvation, but he, too, denied that Augustine taught double predestination. Faustus' theses, which incorporated Cassian's view that God willed universal salvation thus rendering the Atonement efficatious to all who choose to accept it, were held to be against truth, mere invention, and hostile to all Catholic tradition. [20] The value of these polemical writings throughout the church in general was to arouse a new interest in the heritage from Augustine.

Caesarius of Arles, whose interest was aroused by the writings of Faugentius, became the controversy's greatest defender of Augustine. Under his leadership the little Synod of Orange was convened in 529. Prior to this time Pope Felix IV had compiled twenty-five canons which consisted of headings extracted from the writings of both Augustine and Prosper. Caesarius succeeded in having these strongly anti-Semi-Pelagian canons officially adopted by the Synod.

The canons affirmed the moral inability of natural man

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19 Pohle, op. cit., p. 706.

20 Harnack, op. cit., p. 257.

to do any good whatsoever; all moral human activity is dependent wholly upon grace; therefore, grace must be prevenient to all merit, human choice, and volition. These tenets were in direct contradiction to the following distinctive marks of the condemned heresy: (1) Prevenient grace is denied if by that term is meant anything more than the mere preaching of the gospel and the law. (2) Faith is not a "gift" of God. (3) Natural man is not wholly incapable of doing good; the operation of grace is conditioned by the spontaneous operation of man through his power of choice. (4) Grace is imparted in consequence of some merit. [21]

It is quite singular that even though the decision of the Synod of Orange and its later approval by both Pope Boniface II and Gregory the Great was considered a complete victory for Augustinianism, the inner process of grace, election and double predestination, and irresistible grace, all stressed by Augustine, were never mentioned. In reality, the doctrine of irresistible grace was replaced by the concept of the sacramental grace of baptism. Thus the controversy, which was officially disposed by the Synod of Orange, was only apparently at an end.

Since the doctrines espoused by this small synod were to become normative for the whole church, the following leading sentences taken from its concluding confession are

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21 Loofs, op. cit., p. 349.

worthy of note:

> We ought to preach and believe, that the free will has been so inclined and weakened by the sin of the first man, that no one since would be able either to love God as he ought, or to believe on God, or to work what is good before God, unless the grace of the divine mercy had preceded him. We believe that, grace having been received through baptism, all the baptized are able and under obligation to perform by the assistance and co-operation of Christ the things which pertain to the salvation of the soul, if they have resolved to labor faithfully. But that some have by the divine power been predestined to evil, we not only do not believe, but even if there are any who are not willing to believe such an evil thing, we with all detestation pronounce an anathema upon them. He, no good merits preceding, inspires in us faith and love of himself, so that we may both seek in faith the sacrament of baptism, and may be able after baptism, by his assistance, to perform those things which are pleasing to him.[22]

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22 Quoted by Seeberg, op. cit., p. 382.

CHAPTER V. REFORMATION VIEWS OF HUMAN NATURE

This paper has indicated just one area in which Christianity has had to defend herself with heroic courage against perversion of doctrine. Great questions concerning such basic tenets as the Trinity, the deity of Christ, as well as anthropology gave rise to heated debates which ultimately led to the outstanding councils of ancient church history.

Monarchianism, Subordinationism, Arianism, and the Macedonian heresy, all of which sought to destroy the orthodox view of the Trinity, were met by the two councils, Nicea, (325) and Constantinople (381). Out of these grew the Athanasian creed, the orthodox position regarding the Trinity.

Appollinarianism, Nestorianism, Eutychianism, and Monophysitism led to the Chalcedonian Creed of 451 which dealt with the human and divine natures in Christ.

These were followed by what some have called "the most basic problem of them all," the anthropological question. [1] This paper has already explored at some length the Fifth Century controversy which finally culminated in the condemnation of Pelagianism as a heresy at the Third General Council in Ephesus (431).

All of these controversies which contributed to the

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1 Wilder R. Reynolds, The Human Problem (Berne, Indiana: Economy Printing Concern, n.d.), p. 7.

Creed of Catholic Christianity came to be considered officially at an end by the recantation of the Adoption theory by Felix of Urgel in Catalonia in 799. [2]

Subsequent history has shown, however, that controversy was far from finished on any one of these questions. As the protest against Church authoritarianism arose in the 16th century through the Humanism of the Renaissance and the Reformation in religion and theology, dissention arose within the Protestant movement itself concerning points of doctrine. Spiritual successors to Augustine and Pelagius appeared among the Reformers, especially in the persons of John Calvin and Fausto Sozzini. These restatements by Calvin and Sozzini of earlier controversies are not only important within themselves as history, but have great relevance in present day successors who represent contemporary conflicting schools in this same line of thought.

I. CALVIN

John Calvin (1509-1564) was the most outstanding of the Reformers in the Augustinian tradition. He was born a Roman Catholic and seemed destined for the priesthood until his father became disgusted with the Church and persuaded John to study law instead. He adopted the Protestant faith

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2 Joseph Henry Allen, An Historical Sketch of the Unitarian Movement Since the Reformation (New York: The Christian Literature Company, 1894), p. 2.

sometime during either 1532 or 1533, and the first edition of his famous theological treatise, The Institutes of the Christian Religion, appeared in 1536. This work soon was recognized as normative for both his own position and that of his followers.

Although this paper is primarily concerned with anthropology, Calvin's attitude toward human nature cannot be understood apart from his doctrine of God. John Duns Scotus (1265?-1308) maintained that God is absolute will and that will of both God and man is free. Calvin agreed that God is absolute will but he denied the idea that man possesses free will. In fact, he held that man's utter helplessness is the correlate of God's absolute sovereignty. [3] Thus Calvin's anthropology can never be fully understood unless it is viewed as a picture framed within the Scotist view that God is purely arbitrary will.

Calvin accepts the Biblical story of creation literally. He feels that man "exhibits the most noble and remarkable specimen of Divine justice, wisdom, and goodness, among all the works of God," and, as such, was the epitome of the creative acts. [4] Man consists of a body and soul. The

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3 Georgia Harkness, John Calvin: The Man and His Ethics (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1931), p. 70.

4 John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, n.d.), I, 202.

latter is an immortal, yet created essence which represents the nobler part of man's distinctly dual nature. The lesser part is the body of clay. The "image of God" refers only to the spiritual, not the physical part of human nature. Calvin speaks as follows concerning man as originally created in the image of God:

> This term . . . denotes the integrity which Adam possessed, when he was endued with a right understanding, when he had affections regulated by reason, and all his senses governed in proper order, and when, in the excellencey of his nature, he truly resembled the excellence of his Creator. And though the principle seat of the Divine image was in the mind and heart or in the soul and its faculties, yet there was no part of man, not even the body, which was not adorned with some rays of glory. [5]

Adam, who possessed this uncorrupted excellence of human nature, was able fully to utilize reason, understanding, prudence, and judgment as well as free will. Through these unblemished faculties he could have obtained eternal life had he so chosen. He was free to choose either good or evil, although he was "disposed to obedience, till, destroying himself, he corrupted all his excellences." [6] There was but one thing God withheld from Adam--the grace of perseverance. God alone knows why he did not endow Adam with perseverance, yet Adam had no excuse for sinning since he received the utmost in rectitude, soundness of mind, and a free will as an

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5 Ibid., p. 208.

6 Ibid., p. 214.

original endowment. Man can only regard himself as the voluntary procurer of his own destruction. If God willed to give man an "indifferent and mutable will, that from his fall he might educe matter for his own glory." who is man to question? [7]

As an adherent to the doctrine of Determinism, Calvin maintained that every occurance could only be understood as caused by the divine determination. Therefore, God must have willed the Fall and decreed that all the misery of sin should descend upon Adam's posterity. Calvin did not, however, feel that this position excluded the opinion that man is guilty of finding occasion for the fall. [8] He was vigorous in his denunciation of the idea that God is in any way responsible for human sin. Sin, to Calvin, is not the result of God's mere capriciousness as taught by the Schoolmen, nor is sin a part of God's actions as his pantheistic contemporaries, the Libertines, held. It was the result of the misuse of freedom on Adam's part, an action for which every human being is born guilty. [9]

The original sin of Adam must have been a heinous crime to have entailed such dire consequences for the whole race. Mere sensual intemperance is too trivial an offence

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7 Ibid., p. 215.

8 Seeberg, op. cit., p. 406.

9 Harkness, op. cit., p. 75.

in Calvin's estimation. The chief end of all mankind is to glorify God; therefore Adam was set in Paradise to test his faith and obedience. In both of these he miserably failed. His basic sin was pride which led to disobedience, then to the espousal of untruth. Ambition, ingratitude and open rebellion were the end result. Sin, therefore, is doing exactly the opposite of what man was created to do. Instead of contributing to God's glory, man rebelled and is at enmity against God. [10]

> As the spiritual life of Adam consisted in a union to his Maker, so an alienation from him was the death of his soul. Nor is it surprising that he ruined his posterity by his defection, which has perverted the whole order of nature in heaven and earth.
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> This is that hereditary corruption which the fathers called original sin; meaning by sin, the depravation of a nature previously good and pure. [11]

Calvin taught that fallen "men are not born human but devilish." [12] As a consequence of the Fall, human nature is totally vitiated and depraved. Every person descended from Adam, the source and progenitor of all human nature, is born guilty and infected with the contagion of sin. Not only is the punishment of sin derived by each individual from Adam's original sin, but the pollution for which the punishment is

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10 Arthur Dakin, Calvinism (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1946), p. 20.

11 Calvin, op. cit., p. 270.

12 Reynolds, op. cit., p. 9.

justly due is also inherited. Upon this principle, Calvin can proclaim that "even before we behold the light of life, we are in the sight of God defiled and polluted." [13]

Calvin leaned heavily on the Pauline concept of the solidarity of the race. Romans was his chief source for the doctrine that mankind's plight came through Adam while redemption comes through Christ. [14]

> . . . the Lord deposited with Adam the endowments he chose to confer on the human race, and therefore . . . when he lost the favours he had received, he lost them not only for himself, but for us all. [15]

Man's nature is destitute of all good and is so fertile in all evil that it cannot remain inactive. Depravity, consequently, is more than mere negation of original righteousness, it is positive sinfulness and rebellion. ". . . man is so totally overwhelmed, as with a deluge, that no part is free from sin, and therefore . . . whatsoever proceeds from him is accounted sin." [16]

> Original sin, therefore, appears to be an hereditary pravity and corruption of our nature, diffused through all the parts of the soul, rendering us obnoxious to Divine wrath, and producing in us those works which the Scripture calls "works of the flesh." [17]

The cause of this hereditary depravity lies neither in the flesh nor in the soul of man. It is simply God's will

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13 Calvin, op. cit., p. 271.

14 Harkness, op. cit., p. 71.

15 Calvin, op. cit., p. 273.

16 Ibid., p. 275.

17 Ibid., p. 274.

that Adam's descendants are to be so propagated. Hence there need be no further logical or metaphysical basis. The whole matter is tied up in the eternal decrees. There is little or no emphasis upon the solidarity of the race in this regard. Man doesn't sin because he is one of the human race, rather, as a human being he is a guilty sinner because God willed that each of Adam's posterity should be so born. [18]

Human nature was changed at the Fall and an equally radical change is required to insure salvation. Human nature does not need healing, it needs replacement with a new nature. [19] John Stuart Mill, in his famous essay, On Liberty, comments bitterly on this Calvinistic view. According to the Calvinistic theory, Mill states, the chief offense of man is self-will. Obedience alone comprises all the good of which humanity is capable. There is no choice, whatever is not a duty is a sin. "Human nature being radically corrupt, there is no redemption for anyone until human nature is killed within him." [20] This theory of life, Mill adds, thinks it no evil to crush out any of the human faculties, capacities, and suseptibilities; for man needs no capacity

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18 Dakin, op. cit., p. 31.

19 Ibid., p. 34; Calvin, op. cit., p. 321.

20 John Stuart Mill, On Liberty (Saxe Commins and Robert N. Linscott, editors, The World's Great Thinkers, New York: Random House, 1947), III, 199.

other than that of surrendering himself to the will of God; and should he utilize any faculty for any purpose other than doing that supposed will, he is better without it. [21]

Pelagius held that the term, sin, can only be applied to individual acts; Calvin made sin to be a state of mind. It was an inward emphasis in terms of personality rather than in terms of outward action. For Calvin, the hard core of human intractability lay in the realm of the affections and the will--the human mind versus the Supreme mind. The heart of the trouble is sin, not sins, an evil will not lust. [22]

Calvin adhered to the central Reformation doctrines of providence, enslavement of the will, and predestination. The total emphasis upon providence and divine grace leaves absolutely nothing to be considered as the outcome of man's ability. [23] After the Fall, mankind no longer possessed a free will capable of doing good works unless the particular individual happens to be one of the elect who is assisted by that special grace which is bestowed through regeneration.

Calvin admits free will only on the following basis:

> Then man will be said to possess free will in this sense, not that he has an equally free election of good and evil, but because he does evil voluntarily, and not by constraint.

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21 Loc. cit.

22 Dakin, op. cit., pp. 30, 34f.

23 Ibid., p. 33.

> The will, therefore, is so bound by the slavery of sin, that it cannot excite itself, much less devote itself to any.thing good; for such a disposition is the beginning of a conversion to God, which in the Scriptures is attributed solely to Divine grace. [24]

Calvin ascribes to fallen man a radical defect of both the reason and the will. Man is still distinguished from brutes by a corrupted reason, however, even though it is incapable of so much as one righteous desire. The reason is blinded, the will is depraved, and nothing remains but a 'shapeless ruin.' Yet man may be said to have rational power in matters of social government, the arts, letters, and in similar spheres. Calvin felt justified in praising science and philosophy on this basis. It is in matters of higher knowledge, or knowledge of God, where man wholly fails to display any ability. His reason is impotent in this most important realm. [25]

The soul is handicapped not only by the fact that its labors under vice, but it is altogether devoid of good as well. The will, therefore, is incapable of even the slightest movement towards good. Deprived of all liberty, the will is actually led by necessity to evil. Yet man is not constrained to evil, but by virtue of the inevitable consequences of his sinful state, he spontaneously commits evil. Thus Calvin deprives the will of all freedom, unless it be

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24 Calvin, op. cit., pp. 287, 318.

25 Dakin, op. cit., pp. 36f.

to will evil, and at the same time insists upon the idea of human responsibility for it. [26]

> The origin of all good clearly appears, from a plain and certain reason, to be from no other than from God alone; for no propensity of the will to any thing good can be found but in the elect. But the cause of election must not be sought in man. Whence we may conclude, that man has not a good will from himself, but that it proceeds from the same decree by which we were elected before the creation of the world. [27]

This leads to an examination of the prominence which Calvin attaches to the doctrines of election, predestination, irresistible grace, and final perseverance. He felt that men everywhere should be taught that divine benignity is free to all who will seek it without exception, but only the elect, those who are inspired by heavenly grace, will seek it. Even the saint does not have the power of choosing between good and evil for if one is elect and predestined to be saved, how can he resist the grace which God has decreed he will accept? God always operates in man, never cooperates with him, because man is incapable of cooperation from any ability of his own. [28] Calvin clearly sets forth the irresistibility of grace as follows:

> . . . grace is not merely offered by the Lord to be either received or rejected, according to the free choice of each individual, but that it is grace which

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26 Ibid., pp. 38f.

27 Calvin, op. cit., p. 324.

28 Ibid., pp. 328f.

> produces both the choice and the will in the heart; so that every subsequent good work is the fruit and effect of it, and that it is obeyed by no other will but that which it has produced. [29]

Calvin interpreted the Scriptures as unmistakably teaching that God, by an "eternal and immutable counsel," determined once for all through an eternal decree those whom he would admit to salvation and the remainder whom he would condemn to eternal damnation. Every man, therefore, is predestined either to life or to death. [30]

Election has nothing whatever to do with human worth or merit, but depends solely upon the decree which is based wholly upon the arbitrary will of God. Calvin goes so far as to say that the reprobate are expressly raised up in order that the glory of God may be displayed. God's absolute will "is the one fixed and only standard of justice in the universe," and this justice is as applicable to reprobation as to election. [31] Indeed, it is impossible to refer election to the divine will and not reprobation according to Calvin's doctrine of divine determinism. The justice of God is manifested in the reprobation of sinners while his mercy becomes apparent in election. [32]

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29 Ibid., p. 332.

30 Ibid., pp. 176, 181.

31 Dakin, op. cit., pp. 84-87.

32 Seeberg, loc. cit.

In spite of this determinism in Calvin's system, he adheres to the belief that the destined destruction of the reprobate is procured by himself:

> That the reprobate obey not the word of God, when made known to them, is justly imputed to the wickedness and depravity of their hearts, provided it be at the same time stated, that they are abandoned to this depravity because they have been raised up, by a just but inscrutable judgment of God, to display his glory in their condemnation. [33]

"To those whom God predestinates to eternal life He gives the gift of perseverance that they may endure to the end; none of the elect can permanently fall away or be lost." [34] Christ's prayer for Peter that his faith might not fail is illustrative of the way he prays for all of the elect. Hence, Calvin concludes, the elect are of necessity beyond all danger of falling away, since the intercession of the Son of God for their perseverance in piety certainly could never be rejected. Christ intended that the elect should learn from this prayer for Peter the lesson of confidence in their perpetual security. [35] This indicates the closed character of the system.

Since natural man is enslaved by sin to the extent that he is incapable of even an aspiration much less an effort toward the good, the whole matter of salvation rests upon

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33 Calvin, op. cit., II, 235.

34 Reynolds, loc. cit.

35 Calvin, op. cit., p. 226.

God who must both initiate and perfect the new life. God gave the Law as man's guide; yet man was unable to perform any saving works, and the law only succeeded in convincing him still further of his impotence. Salvation is possible only through Christ, the mediator whose Atonement is efficacious to those whom the Holy Spirit incites to faith. [36]

> . . . faith itself, which we possess not by nature but which is given us by the Spirit, is called by Paul "the spirit of Faith." By calling faith "the work" of God, and "the good pleasure of his goodness," he denies it to be the proper effect of human exertion; and not content with that, he adds that it is a specimen of the divine power. And that he may more illustriously display his liberality in so eminent a gift, God deigns not to bestow it promiscuously on all, but by a singular privilege imparts it to whom he will. [37]

Faith is a certain type of knowledge. It is the knowledge of God as Savior; the knowledge of Christ, in other words. But more than merely knowledge, it is the embracing of that knowledge by the mind. The mind is blinded and cannot rise to this proper knowledge and the heart also fluctuates with perpetual doubt, rendering man unable to rest secure. Therefore, in order that the Word of God might be fully appreciated by man, both the mind must receive enlightenment and the heart be confirmed from some source outside of man himself. This is the work of the Holy Spirit, the originator and sustainer of faith. [38]

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36 Harkness, op. cit., pp. 71f.

37 Calvin, op. cit., I, 639.

38 Dakin, op. cit., pp. 56ff.

Repentance springs from faith, and like faith, it is the gift of God. It is regeneration which aims to form anew the image of God that was effaced by Adam's sin. Seeberg points out that for Calvin, repentance is conversion and regeneration extending through the whole life of the believer. [39] It is not a once-for-all act at the start of the Christian life, but is a soul-state characteristic of the Christian's total lifetime. Dakin interprets Calvin to mean that repentance is a life-long mortification of the flesh (asceticism) so that the Spirit may gradually obtain dominion over the elect person. Thus salvation may never be merited by contrition, nor can it be the reward of man's desire. [40]

Faith and repentance in turn lead to justification. Calvin added his weight to the Reformation idea of justification by faith alone. His position was that no man had either any righteousness of his own or the possibility of obtaining any in this life. There is a righteousness in Christ which is available to him, however. This he can receive by faith, and once the Holy Spirit seals it to him, God accepts him as righteous, the actual righteousness of Christ being imputed to him in such a manner that it is reckoned as his own. In this way, God may forgive and

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39 Seeberg, op. cit., p. 402.

40 Dakin, op. cit., pp. 63ff.

receive sinful men into his favor. Salvation is therefore first acceptance by God through Christ, and afterward obedience and service, never vice versa. [41]

Thus man receives a new nature, and the ensuing new life leads to sanctification which is a gradual process of spiritual growth toward perfection. While man is mortal, even though he is of the elect, sin never ceases to dwell in him even though it no longer reigns. The law of sin may be abolished in the children of God and no longer have dominion over them, but the remains of sin survive to humble them and make them conscious of their infirmity. [42]

The whole of Augustinian-Calvinistic anthropology may be founded upon five bases: (1) total depravity, (2) unconditional election, (3) limited Atonement, (4) irresistible grace, and (5) the final perseverance of the elect, all of which is predicated upon the doctrine of the absolute sovereignty of God.

II. SOCINUS

The two Sozzini, uncle and nephew, present a system which is a perplexing mixture of supernaturalism and rationalism. Special emphasis is usually placed upon their heretical views in the realms of Trinitarianism and Christology,

41 Ibid., pp. 68f.

42 Ibid., p. 63.

but their anthropology is by no means a minor issue. A recent devotee to this system stated in a lecture delivered toward the end of the last century in Channing Hall, Boston, that, unfortunately, and in spite of a thousand protests, the name Unitarian has been given to the entire confession whose first article of faith is not the personal unity of God. It is true, he adds, that Servetus and the Sozzini did vigorously defend an Antitrinitarian position, but the movement first known as Socinianism, then Arminianism, and finally Unitarianism, really began as the "natural man" protested against two harsh Calvinistic doctrines affecting human nature, those of depravity and predestination. [43]

Just as Calvin's anthropology cannot be fully appreciated apart from his doctrine of the sovereignty of God, so the Sossini related their tenets concerning human nature to the doctrine of the unity of God as opposed to a community of divine persons. Since Christ is not regarded as a member of the Godhead among these Antitrinitarians, the efficacy of the Atonement and the doctrine of salvation are all affected. If Christ and his death are regarded as merely the highest ideal of human love which gives to Jesus the distinction of holding first place among the martyrs of

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43 Seth C. Beach, Unitarianism and the Reformation (One of sixteen Channing Hall lectures of 1888-89 entitled, Unitarianism: Its Origin and History, Boston: American Unitarian Association, 1895), pp. 48f.

history, but does not represent a true means of salvation, man must possess within his human nature all the latent possibilities of working out his own salvation. Consequently, the anthropological and the Unitarian aspects of Socinianism will never be very far removed from each other; as a matter of fact, they often appear to be in a cause and effect relationship in which it is hard to determine which one precedes the other.

By the middle of the 16th century, Italy had become the center of Antitrinitarian thought. Nominalism and rationalism, as well as humanism and Pelagianism, were large factors in the Italian Renaissance which paved the way for not only the concept of one God and created Christ, but also for the belief in "human nature, in moral freedom, in human reason, in character as of more worth than ritual or creed, in the equal justice not to say mercy of God, in the unreality of a devil, not to say of evil, and in the ultimate salvation, or evolution into something better, of all souls." 44

In 1546, a group of distinguished Italians met in secret meetings in Vicenza to debate theological problems, and it cannot be doubted that the subject of human nature as well as the Trinity was given a large share of the discussion time. The Roman Catholic church became aware of

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44 Loc. cit.

these subversive elements within her jurisdiction and made it so dangerous for this group to remain in Italy that they thought it advisable to flee for refuge across the Alps. The group settled in Grisons in southern Switzerland where the influence of Calvinism was immediately felt. Calvinism emerged victorious in the ensuing conflict over which party was to gain jurisdiction. The Italian group scattered again, this time finding a permanent haven in Poland and Transylvania. [45]

The real leader of these Italian Antitrinitarians was Lelio Sozzini (1525-1562), who was born in Siena, as was his more eminent nephew successor, Fausto. When forced to leave Italy, Lelio went to Switzerland and Germany. He was a student of Melanchthon in Wittenberg for a while in 1550, and twice had the opportunity of meeting Calvin. He possessed the excellent trait of being the inquirer in conversation and seldom, if ever, communicated much of his own opinions.[46] Toward the close of his life he secluded himself in poverty and died without his neighbors ever knowing his secret heretical views. The only person who probably shared his innermost thoughts was his young nephew who later gave credit to his uncle for laying the foundations of Socinianism.

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45 Harnack, op. cit., VII, pp. 132ff.

46 George Park Fisher, History of Christian Doctrine (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901), p. 321.

Fausto Sozzini was born in 1539 and at an early age was left an orphan. Until he was twenty-three, his education, which consisted chiefly of letters and jurisprudence, was rather haphazard and defective. From 1559 until 1662 he lived in Lyons, but he moved to Zurich the same year his uncle died, 1662. There is little doubt but that Fausto often visited his ailing uncle and was admitted to the private thoughts and secret manuscripts which were so carefully hidden. Although, at this time, Fausto no doubt began to think about the theological problems which were to become so large a part of his later life, he was not seriously impressed by the literary fragments left in his possession by his uncle. At the death of his uncle, Fausto returned to the beloved Italy and soon became distinguished by holding honored positions at the court of Francesco de Medici in Florence. For more than a decade he seemed little concerned with religious matters and presumably indulged in the diversions of court life.

No record is given as to what actually aroused Fausto to activity, but suddenly, at the age of thirty-six, he broke off his easy life, arranged for his estates to provide him a sufficient income, and started his study for the defense of the truth. In 1574, he published a <u>Catechism of the Unitarians</u> advocating Scotist-Pelagian and Antitrinitarian views. Toward the end of his life, Sozzini attempted to

repress this Catechism and busied himself with the task of issuing a new statement of doctrine. His death occured in 1604, before the new Catechism was published. This Catechism of Crakow appeared a year later, 1605, and became the manual of faith to the Unitarians for a century or more to come. It was not superceded until that revolution in religion implied by "higher criticism." [47] For the most part, Sozzini's works lacked constructive and independent traits, but rather were occasional and polemic. They were almost childlike in their bald assertions, lacking in strong argumentative form. There is nothing original or fresh about them. As a matter of fact, the whole system had existed before the time of either Lelio or Fausto; the latter merely crystalized and gave expression to it. [48] Nevertheless, he based his beliefs on clear convictions and stood for them with genuine courage.

The central characteristic of the Protestant Reformation was the rediscovery of religion as faith and experience. Socinianism was born of a different motive altogether. It began as a criticism and reconstruction of doctrine. [49] Sozzini unwittingly opened the way to later rationalism by insisting upon this critical study of dogma in comparison

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47 Allen, op. cit., p. 95.

48 Ibid., p. 69.

49 Thomas M. Lindsay, A History of the Reformation (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1922), pp. 473f.

with revelation. Since he rejected any doctrinal interpretation in the light of traditional creeds, there was but one other source of authority upon which to rely, the common-sense reason of the critic.[50] Thus the whole system may be said to be based upon rationalism and individualism.

The Catechism restates much of Pelagian anthropology. Adam was created in the image of God. This means that he possessed both spirit and reason as distinguishing features which gave him dominion over the rest of creation. He was created mortal, however, just as all men have been since that day. Sozzini accused conservative theology of erring by teaching that Adam originally possessed a perfect body, reason, and will. The Fall is to be explained by the fact that Adam's understanding was limited and his will inexperienced. It seems that God was responsible in some way for overstimulating concupiscence which overpowered Adam. In spite of this "original sin," neither Adam nor any of his descendants lost any power of absolute freedom in choosing between good and evil.[51] Thus man always has been, and always will be, capable of living a perfectly virtuous life if he but chooses to do so. The basis of religion is not a supernatural gift of grace, but is a propensity of human

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50 Allen, op. cit., pp. 58f.

51 Neve, op. cit., II, 84.

nature itself. [52]

Sozzini feels justified in denying a transmissible guilt for "original sin" or an inherited depravity of the human nature on the basis of the fact that the Scriptures admonish men to repent and be converted. How could they require of man that which he finds impossible to fulfill? Kant restated this view when he later declared, "Thou canst because thou must." The work of the Holy Spirit, therefore, is not needed since no creative divine act of grace is involved. [53]

In spite of man's autonomy, he is still mortal and inclined to sin. Without Christ's example, as well as the guidance of the Scriptures, he cannot find deliverance from death or the way of regeneration which would transmute him into that blessed state where he becomes immortal essence. This state is the direct gift of God which is promised as a reward only to those who are submissive and obedient to the divine commandments. Herein lies the significance of Christ's work upon the earth, for He was the bearer of this message and pledged it by the resurrection. [54] The unfaithful and wicked do not suffer everlasting torment in hell, but are annihilated, thus losing their portion in this promise.

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52 Allen, op. cit., p. 71.

53 Neve, loc. cit.

54 Allen, loc. cit.

Natural religion is rejected, and the basis of all truth is the Bible, particularly the New Testament which is attested by the miracles including the supreme evidence of veracity--the resurrection. In placing so much emphasis upon Scripture, Socinianism does not mean that it is a means of grace or a personal communion between God and trusting followers. [55] All mysteries in dogma and doctrine which cannot be supported by reason are rejected, for without reason it would be impossible either to feel certain about the authority of the Scriptures, or to understand anything they contain. Therefore, there needs to be a qualification of the assertion that the Scriptures are sufficient for salvation by indicating that this does not exclude reason, but includes it. Christ is not the revelation of the Book but of the Will of God and the way of salvation, which, if perfectly and correctly known, constitute the saving doctrine. This is the sole purpose and value of the Scriptures. [56]

To say that the Atonement is necessary is to slur the very nature of God. The Catechism maintains that God could have saved man without Christ's death, or, he could have appointed another mediator just as well, or not have appointed any mediator at all. Thus, if the Atonement is unnecessary, it simply does not exist. The passion of our Lord was merely

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55 Lindsay, op. cit., p. 476.

56 Harnack, op. cit., pp. 137, 141.

an example or moral influence for man and a pledge of his forgiveness. The death of Christ may be considered "necessary" for two reasons; (1) to attest the great love of God for human redemption, and (2) to attest the resurrection to eternal life on the condition of obedience. [57]

Faith is considered obedience, not an evangelical attitude. It is by faith that men accept the promises of Christ and seek to keep the precepts he reveals. Faith, as defined in the Socinian manner, is totally intellectual in contradistinction to Luther's usage of the term as meaning a throwing of oneself upon God in perfect trust. Calvin would agree that faith is a type of knowledge, but it is knowledge of the saving Christ, bestowed only through the agency of the Holy Spirit upon a limited few who are enabled by the same Spirit to embrace it, thereby being transformed.

Justification meant very little to Sozzini. The chief determining factor is ever and always obedience. The Socinian articles of faith contain three elements of justification; (1) assent to the teachings of Jesus, (2) trust in God through Christ, and (3) obedience to divine commandments. [58]

In summary, the following quotation by a fellow Unitarian concisely presents the chief tenets of Sozzini:

57 Otto Zoeckler, "Socinus, Faustus, Socinians", The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, X, 492.

58 Loc. cit.

> He denied the Trinity, the deity of Christ, the personality of the Devil, the native and total depravity of man, the vicarious atonement, and the eternity of punishment. His theory was that Christ was a man divinely commissioned, who had no existence before he was conceived by the virgin Mary; that human sin was the imitation of Adam's sin, and that human salvation was the imitation and adoption of Christ's virtue; that the Bible was to be interpreted by human reason, and that its metaphors were not to be taken literally.[59]

Fausto Sozzini presents a striking contrast to John Calvin. Could it not be that, as with Pelagius and Augustine, there was a gulf fixed by the temperaments of the two men? Calvin was harshly intolerant and had experienced a definite personal conversion of such a nature that he overemphasized those Scriptures concerning God's absolute sovereignty and overlooked man's part entirely. As a contrast, the tolerant Sozzini evidenced no such conversion. He possessed a cool, consistent temperament and probably knew little about an inner struggle for self-control.

Fausto Sozzini lived a noble personal life which cannot help but demand admiration; however, his coldly intellectual system led to a still more frigid rationalism of a later day which blighted man's warm personal communion with God through his eternal Son, Christ Jesus. In about a century, Socinianism and the Racovian Catechism were eclipsed by their stepchild, "higher criticism" or German Rationalism. This is a tragic commentary on the fact that even though

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59 Beach, op. cit., p. 71.

Sozzini would be classified as a conservative in the eyes of his later liberal followers, his system had latent within it those weaknesses that laid it open to the destructive criticism to come.

Walker gives a fitting evaluation of Socinianism as follows:

> It did not a little to free religion from the bondage of dogma and to favor the unprejudiced study of Scripture; but it had almost no conception of what religion meant to Paul, Augustine, or Luther--a new, vital personal relationship between the believing soul and God through Christ. [60]

III. DOMINANT VIEW

Luther. Luther (1483-1546) was thoroughly acquainted with Augustine whom he had ample opportunity to study carefully while a monk of the Augustinian Eremite Order. [61] In no instance does he deny any of the Augustinian beliefs. This admiration of Augustine led him to an intensive study of the Pauline epistles which "gave to the Lutheran Reformation that decidedly Pauline and Augustinian character in opposition to Pelagianism and to Semi-Pelagianism in all of its forms." [62]

Luther heartily agreed that all men have sinned in Adam's sin. Original sin is equated with self-will which

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60 Walker, op. cit., p. 453.

61 Lindsay, op. cit., pp. 195f.

62 Weve, op. cit., I, 221.

Luther felt was the deepest and greatest sin. This ever present unconscious will permeates every merely human action; so it is altogether proper to speak of a universal and real depravity of human nature. [63] Luther stressed the inability of man even to initiate the process of his own salvation as a consequence of this hereditary depravity. To those predestinated to salvation, God bestows grace which enables the elect to have faith--a complete entrusting of oneself to God--which in turn produces justification. He denied an election to reprobation, however. He heatedly defended the doctrine of the bondage of the will against Erasmus who maintained that the will is perfectly free. This determinism was expressed in Luther's De Servo Arbitrio, written for the "benefit" of Erasmus in 1524. [64]

Melanchthon. Melanchthon was the chief theologian of Lutheranism. He was a keener scholar and displayed a more brilliant intellect than Luther; nevertheless, he was a staunch disciple of the great Reformer. Their most important difference was over the doctrine of predestination. Melanchthon was prone to give recognition to the human will as a factor in salvation. [65] When Luther was disputing with Erasmus over free will, Melanchthon manifested a growing

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63 Ibid., p. 230.

64 Ibid., pp. 220f.

65 Beach, op. cit., p. 56.

inclination to favor the ideal of the latter. He felt that the natural man possesses a high natural endowment even though it is hindered by an inherited weakness which cannot be overcome without the cooperation of the Holy Spirit. He recognized three causes of salvation: (1) the Word, (2) the Holy Spirit, and (3) the human will. Man retained the latter after the Fall, and by it he is able to apply himself to grace. [66] Thus salvation is a work of grace involving the joint activity of both God and man. Aside from this departure from his original deterministic position, Melanchthon was in agreement with the anthropology of Luther and Augustine.

Zwingli. In Switzerland the Reformation was spearheaded by Huldreich Zwingli (1484-1531). Humanism had a strong hold upon the educational institutions of Switzerland; and, when Zwingli received degrees for both his undergraduate and graduate work at the University of Basel, he was indelibly influenced by humanistic principles. He never knew the agonizing spiritual experience of sin and forgiveness comparable to that which left such marked effects on Luther; instead, his religious attitude tended to be more intellectual and radical. [67]

The theology of Zwingli cannot be simply categorized, but in general it took an Augustinian turn. He believed that

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66 Neve, op. cit., p. 258.

67 Walker, op. cit., p. 360.

Adam was created free but met spiritual death when he sinned. Since that time all men have been born with an infirm nature. The effect of Zwingli's humanistic background is evidenced by the fact that, for him, original sin is a "sickness" of the human nature and not guilt. [68] Although he thus accepted the concept of the fall, he understood the atonement as having neutralized it. Therefore, a child starts life today with the moral equivalent of Adam's original state. Were this view not qualified by the rest of his beliefs, Zwingli might be accused of being Pelagian. The inheritance of evil is not sin, but, as has already been indicated, it is a moral weakness. [69] This invalided nature renders self-redemption impossible, however, and the only deliverance is through the atonement made by Christ. Rather than viewing faith as a prerequisite or means to salvation, Zwingli thought of it as merely the token of election and the assurance of salvation which God instills in the hearts of the elect. His view of God as Absolute Causality laid the foundation for a rigidly deterministic system. He closely paralleled Calvin in his view of predestination as an objective election resting solely upon divine decree.

Most historians agree that Zwingli and Luther were substantially in agreement on most doctrinal issues, but

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68 Seeberg, op. cit., II, 309.

69 Beach, op. cit., p. 58.

that no two temperaments could have been much more diverse. Even their religious experience was altogether different. Luther had experienced a definite religious struggle involving a deep sense of transformation at his conversion. Zwingli, on the other hand, had travelled the road of the humanist and reached an Evangelical position gradually. Zwingli felt that the will of God was of more importance than the way of salvation. Luther viewed the Christian life as forgiven sonship, whereas Zwingli thought of it as conformity to the will of God as set forth in the Scriptures. [70]

When Zwingli is called a humanist, it should be kept in mind that this term as applied to the Renaissance and Reformation period of history differs from its present meaning:

> Renaissance Humanism did not repudiate Christianity nor did it deny the existence of God. It took for granted the place of religion and religious beliefs in the life of man but refused to accept the hard-bound scholasticism of the Middle Ages or to be subdued under the authority of the church. [71]

Knox. John Knox (1505-1572) lived during the period of English and Scotch history when Protestantism and national independence were heated issues. He served one term on the continent as a religious and political prisoner. The second

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70 Walker, op. cit., p. 363.

71 Elias Andrews, Modern Humanism and Christian Theism (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1939), p. 39.

time he left the British Isles, he did so voluntarily to escape the wrath of the English crown. He received a warm welcome in Geneva, where he became an ardent disciple of Calvin. Thereafter, wherever his influence was felt, a strong Calvinistic system appeared. When he led the Reformation in Scotland, the Parliament adopted a Calvinistic confession of faith as the creed of the realm. [72]

England had a turbulent time trying to establish herself as a Protestant country. When she did emerge as Protestant, she was largely Calvinistic even though the Arminian and Unitarian movements flourished within her borders. The Calvinistic Knox helped to compose the Forty-two articles out of which grew the later and final Thirty-nine articles of the Anglican church. By the end of the sixteenth century there were five contending religious bodies in England: the Roman Catholics, the Anglicans, the Baptists, the Congregationalists, and the Presbyterians. The last three were Puritan Separatists and very definitely Calvinistic.

Summary. It would be difficult to lay down a blanket statement concerning the Reformation point of view as a whole, for in reality almost all shades of belief concerning depravity, free will, grace, and predestination existed, but it could probably be said with a degree of certainty that the Calvinistic-Augustinian view was by far the most predominant.

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72 Walker, op. cit., pp. 416-418.

The modern Neo-Orthodox movement claims that it is building upon the proper interpretation of Calvinism which, they maintain, is the true Reformation spirit.

IV. ARMINIANISM

The humanistic spirit which stemmed from Erasmus had never completely died out in Holland, and the extreme form of Calvinism which attempted to gain a secure hold upon the Reformed Church gave rise to a movement of reaction. Calvin had severely condemned the Catholic stress upon the absolutism of the external Church. Instead, he elevated the doctrine of the absolutism of divine decrees. Thus a new dogmatism arose which was just as rigid as the Roman authoritarian view. The recoil was inevitable.

The controversy came to a focus upon the supralapsarian interpretation of predestination as advocated by the outstanding Calvinistic divines after Calvin's death. Beza led this group who asserted that the decree to salvation was the result of a divine counsel prior to the Fall, and, in order that it might be accomplished, required the corollary decree to sin. According to this line of reasoning, sin is considered a means, not an end. The primary decree was to salvation, but it was necessary for the Fall to have been decreed as well, for how could a man be saved if he had not

first been lost? [73]

The Dutch scholar, Dirck Coornhert (1522-1590) countered supralapsarianism with a strong emphasis upon infralapsarianism or the claim that God simply permitted Adam's fall but was not directly responsible for it. With regard to the elective decrees, this view assumes that God chose after the Fall had transpired to utilize this method of saving a limited number.

In the controversy which ensued, Jacobus Arminius 1560-1609) was asked by the strict Calvinists to defend supralapsarian views against Coornhert in a public debate. The more Arminius studied the problem, the more he lost faith in the position he elected to defend. The sequel to the debate was startling in that Arminius became the leader of the group he was supposed to defeat. In fact, "as he studied the questions involved, Arminius came to doubt the whole doctrine of unconditional predestination and to ascribe to man a freedom." [74] After Arminius' death, the battle continued to be waged, and a definite Arminian system was developed by Wtenbogaert (1557-1644) and Episcopus (1583-1643). Finally, under the leadership of Oldenbarnevelt (1547-1619), the group was organized and called themselves "Remonstrants."

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73 Frederic Platt, "Arminianism," James Hastings, editor, Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, I, 807f.

74 Walker, op. cit., p. 454.

Hagenbach interprets the Arminian symbols as agreeing with Calvin's belief in the original freedom of the will but rejecting, on this very account, the doctrine of original holiness. How could man have sinned if he was holy? There must have been an original mixture of innocence and ignorance or Satan could not have made easy prey of the original pair. [75]

The Arminians abhorred the idea that the fall was in any way necessitated or made certain to occur by either a positive or permissive form of divine decree. It was wholly the result of the first man's volition. Arminius was never quite ready to repudiate the element of transmissible guilt in connection with original sin, but his immediate successors denied guilt in the strongest of terms. They regarded any theory of Adamic imputation of guilt upon his descendents as both unreasonable and incompatible with a proper understanding of God's moral character. [76]

The Arminian concept of original sin is in agreement with that of Zwingli. Depravity is a bias or weakness of the human nature which has in no way destroyed free will but leaves man responsible for his destiny through his choice between faith or unbelief. [77] Depravity is total in extent but not in degree, whereas Calvin maintained a belief in

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75 Hagenbach, op. cit., II, 254.

76 Sheldon, op. cit., II, 129f.

77 Platt, op. cit., p. 810.

total depravity both in degree and extent. Arminianism admitted that the fall left man naturally bereft of his birthright to eternal life and caused a transmission of a corrupted nature. This latter was not a penal infliction, however, but a natural consequence. No soul is ever condemned solely on the basis of original sin, for even though fallen man has lost his ability in spiritual matters, the divine purpose has provided a universal remedy for that inability. [78]

Two leading principles are prominent in this system: (1) the freedom of the human will as an element of the divine decrees, and (2) the universal benefits of the atonement. [79] The Arminian definition of freedom is opposed to any implication of either compulsion, necessity, or spontaneity. The power of alternate choice is considered the basic essential of freedom. Even though man has the power to choose salvation, his natural abilities cannot effect his recovery apart from prevenient and co-operating grace which can be appropriated by "whosoever will." [80] Hence salvation depends upon both grace and the co-operation of the will. Conversion must be attributed finally, however, to the work of the Holy Spirit. Works will in no way merit salvation; nevertheless,

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78 Sheldon, op. cit., p. 130f.

79 Platt, op. cit., p. 808.

80 Sheldon, op. cit., pp. 120, 131.

God justifies on the basis of that faith which includes obedience. [81]

In 1610, the Remonstrants published the five Arminian articles of faith entitled, Articuli Arminiani sive Remonstrantia. These Articles, quoted in part below, were the basis upon which Arminianism was later judged and condemned.

> Article I. That God, by an eternal, unchangeable purpose in Jesus Christ his Son, before the foundation of the world, hath determined, out of the fallen, sinful race of men, to save . . . through Christ, those who through the grace of the Holy Ghost, shall believe on this his Son Jesus, and shall persevere in this faith and obedience of faith, through this grace, even to the end; and, on the other hand, to leave the incorrigible and unbelieving in sin and under wrath . . . .
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> Article II. That, agreeably thereto, Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world, died for all men and for every man, . . . yet . . . no one actually enjoys this forgiveness of sins except the believer. . . .
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> Article III. That man has not saving grace of himself, not of the energy of his free will, . . . but that it is needful that he be born again of God in Christ, through his Holy Spirit, and renewed in understanding, inclination, or will, and all his powers, in order that he may rightly understand, think, will, and effect what is truly good, ...
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> Article IV. That this grace of God is the beginning, continuance, and accomplishment of all good, even to this extent, that the regenerate man himself, without . . . grace, can neither think, will, nor do good, nor withstand any temptation to evil; so that all good deeds or movements, . . . must be ascribed to the grace of God in Christ. But as respects the mode of the operation of this grace, it is not irresistible, ...
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> Article V. That those who are incorporated into Christ by a true faith, and have thereby become partakers

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81 Platt, op. cit., p. 810.

> of his life-giving Spirit, have thereby full power to strive against Satan, sin, the world, and their own flesh, and to win the victory; it being well understood that it is ever through the assisting grace of the Holy Ghost; . . . .[82]

As an appendage to article five, the Remonstrants added a clause signifying their inability to reach a definite conclusion concerning the perseverance of the saints. Later adherents to this system rejected the idea of perseverance, however, in favor of the view which made possible the amissibility of grace.

Platt makes the following comment upon the position of Arminius in the development of doctrine. Calvin stressed the aspect of God as supreme; Pelagius overemphasized man as autonomous. Arminius aimed at expressing a doctrinal position which would be consistent with the necessary relations between God and man. "The mission of Arminius was to show how God could be what the Church taught he was, and man what the Church declared him to be, at one and the same time."[83]

The conditional view advocated by the Remonstrants brought about one of the most unusual and decisive councils of Protestantism. The opposition party or Contraremonstrants convened the Synod of Dort, 1619, and called upon it to

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82 Articuli Arminiani sive Remonstrantia (Philip Schaff, editor, The Creeds of Christendom, with a History and Notes, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1919), III, 545-548.

83 Platt, op. cit., p. 809.

decide the final policy for the Reformed Church. The whole thing was a neat bit of ecclesiastical intrigue, for the far out-numbered Remonstrants were barred from the more important and decisive sessions; consequently, the outcome was never in doubt.

The position of Arminianism in relation to the Calvinistic-Socinian antithesis of the Reformation parallels the relationship of Semi-Pelagianism to the Pelagian-Augustinian controversy of the fifth century. Just as Semi-Pelagianism was officially condemned by the Synod of Orange in favor of a type of Augustinianism, Arminianism was condemned by the Synod of Dort in favor of the agressively Calvinistic Heidelberg Catechism.

Although banished, the Remonstrants continued to grow. In Holland, Arminianism moved imperceptibly to the left until ultimately it reached a position with little to distinguish it from Socinianism. Arminianism exerted a greater influence upon England than it did upon its home land. In Great Britain this influence moved in two directions: (1) Some of the English Arminians leaned toward a liberal, Socinian position which finally led to Rationalism. The resulting "latitudinarianism," together with some philosophical influences, was one source of English Deism and Unitarianism. (2) The Wesleyan interpretation of Arminianism had very little or nothing in common with the above position. The Wesleyan revival

represents a thoroughly evangelistic movement which had a fundamental aversion to the doctrine of predestination and emphasized man's action in laying hold of saving grace.[84] The following chapter will deal with this latter expansion of Arminianism.

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84 Neve, op. cit., pp. 27f.

CHAPTER VI. WESLEYAN ARMINIANISM

Wesley's parents were Nonconformists with a distinct hostility to Calvinism. At this time, the Church of England was largely Arminian, and there is no reason to doubt that Wesley always subscribed to Arminianism as well. The theology of the Anglican divines, however, omitted many of the sound doctrinal tenets which original Arminianism had defended as well as corrected. Rationalism, Deism, and Latitudinarianism became the chief points of emphasis until by 1740 the populace of England was so gripped by these rationalistic accretions that thousands of Englishmen scarcely had an opportunity to hear evangelical Christian teaching of any kind. Wesley stood in sharpest opposition to this scientific rationalism which swept away much of the personal and historical elements of Christianity and substituted in their place an abstract theism. He might be classified as a part of a "romantic" movement which "renewed the conviction that human nature contains a daemonic element which expresses itself in sure intuitions, through the passions, and that such intuitions are to be trusted in preference to any conclusions of the mere reasoning intellect." [1] Thus, in spite of the fact that in his later ministry Wesley vigorously

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1 Robert Shafer, From Beowulf to Thomas Hardy (new edition, New York: The Odyssey Press, 1939-1940), II, 23.

defended Arminianism against the Calvinistically inclined Methodists, George Cell is essentially correct in maintaining that Wesley's chief interest was not to be antidotal to certain Calvinistic excesses, but was to recover and re-establish the original evangelical principles of Arminianism. [2] In other words, Wesley actually reacted so strongly against the humanistic Arminianism of his day that he adopted a theocentric doctrine of Christian experience which very nearly coincided with Calvinism. [3] To question number 22 in the "Minutes of Some Late Conversations," "Does not the truth of the Gospel lie very near to Calvinism . . . ?," Wesley replies, "Indeed it does; as it were, within a hair's breadth . . ." [4]

Wesley's theological position must depend upon an interpretation of his sermons and works which were practical in intent rather than theological. Piette expresses the sentiment of each student of Wesley when he says that it is a matter of regret that Wesley did not leave a written systematic summary of his religious position. In fact, his bent of mind was far from speculative, for, first and always,

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2 George Croft Cell, The Rediscovery of John Wesley (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1935), p. 23.

3 Ibid., p. 15.

4 John Wesley, "Minutes of Some Late Conversations," The Works of Reverend John Wesley (First American complete and standard edition, New York: J. Emory and B. Waugh, 1831), V, 201.

his interest was experimental. Faith, to him, must be preached as it is lived, felt and experienced rather than on the basis of any abstract theological principles. [5]

In an age when natural science had discovered that man was not the center of the universe; in a century which had inherited the discovery that the earth, of which man is an insignificant inhabitant, was itself only a speck in a great solar system, Wesley asserted the dignity and significance of man by virtue of the fact that the race was brought forth in response to the creative will of God for reasons which are hidden in the infinite wisdom of the Creator. [6]

Body and soul are two distinct realities in Wesley's thinking. The body is a machine "fearfully and wonderfully made," which is at one with the physical universe. Yet there is something qualitatively different from this body in man's rational power even though it depends largely upon the senses for the data of its reflections. This faculty is located somewhere in the "head" and is not only capable of thought but also of producing emotions. Both the emotions and reason are subject to the will, which is the active principle of the soul. Wesley is at a loss when it comes to describing the soul. He refused to identify it with material

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5 Maximin Piette, John Wesley in the Evolution of Protestantism (London: Sheed and Ward, 1938), pp. 435f.

6 William Ragsdale Cannon, The Theology of John Wesley (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1946), pp. 180-183.

substance which is always composed of passive elements. It is, rather, the active principle whereby man puts his body into motion. Thus, man's true nature is distinct from the body in that he transcends the physical aspect of his nature through thought, the will, and self-determination, all of which are properties of the soul that continue to exist beyond physical death. [7]

In seeking to portray the natural state of man, Wesley refuses to adhere to any theological presuppositions without first witnessing the facts. He does not account for the universality of sin without first establishing the fact of sin as an universal element in human life. [8]

> First, I say, let us inquire, What is the real state, with regard to knowledge and virtue, wherein mankind have been from the earliest times? And what state are they in at this day? [9]

In answer to the first of these questions, Wesley appeals to Moses' record of ante-deluvian man. The very fact that God "saw that the wickedness of man was great, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually," [10] should be proof enough of the evil character of those days. The Bible is clear in showing that,

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7 Ibid., pp. 183ff.

8 John Wesley, "The Doctrine of Original Sin, according to Scripture, Reason, and Experience," op. cit., V, 493.

9 Loc. cit.

10 Genesis 6:5, 12, 13.

out of all of the inhabitants of the earth, Noah was the only righteous person in God's sight. For sixteen hundred years men had corrupted themselves and each other until the degree of their wickedness was intolerable and only eight persons were counted worthy of escaping destruction. "So deplorable was the state of the moral world, while the natural was in its highest perfection." 11

Even after the flood there is no record of a universal repentance, but mankind continued in the same wicked way. Wesley writes at great length describing the empirical fact of sin from the time of the sons of Noah on through various cultures and civilizations until the present moment when misery, war, and trouble beset on every side.

> Still, then, sin is the baleful source of affliction; and, consequently, the flood of miseries which covers the face of the earth,--which overwhelms not only single persons, but whole families, towns, cities, kingdoms,--is a demonstrative proof of the overflowing of ungodliness in every nation under heaven. 12

Wesley thus finds the evidence overwhelmingly to demonstrate the universality of the sinful character of man's nature, but how was it to be accounted for? His monograph, The Doctrine of Original Sin, was inspired by Dr. John Taylor's treatise on the same subject. This latter work is thoroughly Pelagian in its assertion that sin originated and continues

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11 Wesley, op. cit., p. 494.

12 Ibid., p. 523.

to arise through the medium of bad education and evil custom. Wesley does not deny the potent force of example and reason; nevertheless, he finds it difficult to believe that no culture at any time in the history of the world could ever discover the proper type of education. He asks, How did this bad education commence? Where was its point of origin? The date must have been extremely ancient for

> Profane history gives us a large account of universal wickedness, that is, universal bad education, for above two thousand years last past. Sacred history adds the account of above two thousand more; in the very beginning of which (more than four thousand years ago) "all flesh had corrupted their ways before the Lord!" or, to speak agreeably to this hypothesis, were very corruptly educated.[13]

Wesley then finds the final grounds for discarding this theory in the fact that the first family was apparently responsible for the bad education, but obviously their vice could not have come from education, it must have arisen from another source.[14] This other source can be discovered in no other place than the Scriptural account of the Fall which fixes the blame squarely upon human nature itself.

The first sin was not so much an openly disobedient act as it was an evidence of unbelief and rebellion in the heart. It was a seeking for selfish satisfaction instead of obedience to the commands of the Maker. Thus, the first sin was an

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13 Loc. cit.

14 Ibid., p. 524.

inward idolatry, a love for the creature more than for the Creator. Hence, in perfect accord with Augustine, Luther, and Calvin, Wesley insists that the nature of sin is spiritual pride which causes man to love himself more than he loves God. [15]

Adam was created with a positive bent toward righteousness, and with a flawless human nature. How, then, is the first sin to be explained? The only answer Wesley makes is that in God's infinite wisdom, it pleased him to bestow upon Adam an absolute freedom which placed him on probation for the proper use of this power of choice. The boon of freedom became a bommerang and proved the undoing of Adam, for he failed miserably by choosing to gratify his self-will rather than to be obedient to the divine will. Sin, therefore, must be considered as an independent act of man's own nature based upon his own free choice, and cannot be attributed to God. [16]

Prior to the Fall, man lived in a state of perfection implied by the fact that he bore the image of God. This imago Dei was threefold: (1) the natural image which included free will, rational powers, and immortality, (2) the political image which bestowed upon man the powers of government over the rest of creation, and (3) the moral image in that man was

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15 Cannon, op. cit., pp. 192f.

16 Ibid., pp. 193ff.

created positively righteous and holy. [17] Although man was thus made in the image of God, he was far from immutable. [18] The fall completely reversed the conditions of human life: the primitive perfection was replaced by total corruption; spiritual, temporal, and eternal death resulted; and in place of the completely obliterated moral aspect of the imago Dei, each man is born in the "image of the devil, in pride and self-will; in the image of the beast, in sensual appetites and desires." [19] The formal element of the natural and political images partially remains, but the original content is either destroyed or horribly distorted. [20]

The result of the Fall was immediate and far reaching. Pain, misery, unhappiness, and sin entered into the stream of human history. The whole earth, including the animal kingdom, has reaped the dire consequences. The race became dead in the sight of the Lord; no one has been able to approximate the original righteousness of Adam. Each person is born with a sinfully corrupted nature which deprives him of his free will and all power to do good. Wesley makes three basic

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17 Harald Lindström, Wesley and Sanctification: A Study in the Doctrine of Salvation (Stockholm: Nya Bokforlags Aktiebolaget, 1946), pp. 25f.

18 John Wesley, Sermon XLV, "The New Birth," The Works of the Reverend John Wesley (Third American complete and Standard edition, New York: Eaton and Mains, n.d.), Sermons, I, 400.

19 Ibid., p. 401.

20 Lindström, op. cit., p. 44.

assumptions about the consequences of the Fall: (1) man became totally corrupt, (2) this corruption is the result of original sin, and (3) man can be justified and regenerated only through God's grace in Jesus Christ. [21]

In his view of the transmission of original sin, Wesley was in keeping with the Augustinian-Calvinistic tradition by ascribing to Adam the federalheadship of the race. When Adam sinned, upon every individual was imputed the guilt of sin in that the fall of the primogenitor constituted the fall of the whole race. "The state of all mankind did so far depend on Adam, that, by his fall, they all fell . . ." [22]

Wesley defined inbred or original sin as an inclination or bent toward evil; or, even stronger, it is the total corruption of the human nature. Wesley's words are unequivocal in this regard:

> . . . our nature is deeply corrupted, inclined to evil, and disinclined to all that is spiritually good; so that, without supernatural grace, we can neither will nor do what is pleasing to God . . . whereby experience and reason do so strongly confirm this Scriptural doctrine of original sin. [23]

As has already been stated, not only is the corruption of original sin inherited, but the guilt is also entailed upon each human being. "Before an individual acts in any

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21 Ibid., pp. 20f.

22 Wesley, "The Doctrine of Original Sin," op. cit., p. 589.

23 Ibid., p. 547.

way whatsoever he has incurred the wrath of God through Adam's sin." [24] "Wesley goes all the way with Calvin, with Luther, and with Augustine in his insistence that man is by nature totally destitute of righteousness and subject to the judgment and wrath of God." [25] The harshness of this position is only alleviated by Wesley's Moravian and Arminian view of election.

Not only did Wesley veiw original sin in its collective sense, but he stressed an individual approach as well. He refuses to ascribe a full sense of guilt to the individual solely on the basis of the collective fact of original sin. Even though the doctrine of original sin requires an imputed guilt, the full sense of guilt comes only on the basis of personal guilt which can arise from no other source than the actual sins of the individual. Imputed guilt involves only temporal and spiritual death, whereas eternal death is wholly dependent upon personal guilt. In this manner, Wesley repudiates the Calvinistic doctrine of reprobation and makes predestination conditional. God never is responsible for eternal damnation, it is contingent upon personal responsibility, which opportunity of choice is founded upon God's universal bestowal of the grace of free will. [26] The following

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24 Lindström, op. cit., pp. 27f.

25 Cannon, op. cit., p. 200.

26 Lindström, op. cit., pp. 32-37.

paragraph from Wesley himself is clear in this respect:

> From this infliction of our nature (call it original sin, or what you please) spring many, if not all, actual sins. . . But "if all actual transgressions proceed from Adam's sin, then he is the only guilty person that ever lived. For if his sin is the cause of all ours, he alone is chargeable with them." True; if all our transgressions so proceed from his sin, that we cannot possibly avoid them. But this is not the case: by the grace of God we may cast away our transgressions; therefore, if we do not, they are chargeable on ourselves. We may live; but we will die . . . . By grace we may conquer this inclination; or we may choose to follow it, and so commit actual sin. [27]

The Wesleyan Revival was twofold in its emphasis: (1) It was a reaction against the Arminian Anglicanism in the doctrine of Christian experience and against the High Church emphasis upon works and institutions, and (2) it was a return to the faith emphasis of the Reformers. [28] Nowhere is this latter emphasis more evident than in Wesley's doctrines of justification by faith and the new birth. Calvin and Wesley agree on these; as a matter of fact, Wesley wrote to a friend, "I think on Justification . . . just as Mr. Calvin does. In this respect I do not differ from him an hair's-breadth." [29] The reaction against the Anglican emphasis upon works is manifest in the sermon entitled, "Salvation by

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27 Wesley, op. cit., p. 548.

28 Cell, op. cit., p. 17.

29 John Wesley, "A letter to a Friend," (Nehemiah Curnock, editor, The Journal of the Reverend John Wesley, Standard edition, London: The Epworth Press, 1938), V, 116, May 14, 1765.

Faith." Wesley asks, "Wherewithal then shall a sinful man atone for any, the least of his sins? With his own works? No. Were they ever so many or holy, they are not his own, but God's." [30] Salvation comes only through justifying faith:

> Justifying faith implies, not only a divine evidence or conviction that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself," but a sure trust and confidence that Christ died for my sins, that he loved me, and gave himself for me. [31]

The two doctrines of justification and regeneration or the new birth are fundamental in Wesley's opinion. They are inseparable, and it is impossible to postulate any time sequence in their relationship, for, in all probability, they are simultaneous acts of God. Justification is what God does for men. "The plain scriptural notion of justification is pardon, the forgiveness of sins." [32] The new birth is what God works in man--renewing his fallen nature. The corruption of human nature is the basis of regeneration; since man is born in sin, he must be "born again." [33]

Wesley and Calvin agree that man is justified, i.e., accepted of God and forgiven of past sins, wholly on the basis of grace. "If the sinful men find favor with God, it

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30 Wesley, Sermon I, "Salvation by Faith," op. cit., p. 13.

31 Wesley, Sermon V, "Justification by Faith," op. cit., p. 50.

32 Ibid., p. 47.

33 Wesley, Sermon XLV, "The New Birth," op. cit., pp. 399, 401.

is 'grace upon grace.'" [34] Although the two men are not a hair's-breadth apart here, they are infinitely separated with respect to the nature of the operation of grace. Calvin and Wesley agree that man is totally corrupt and of himself is utterly helpless; they agree that salvation comes by grace; but they disagree at the point of election and predestination. Wesley insists that the free grace of God is bestowed on all men at the moment of birth under the terms of the Atonement, and that by this prevenient grace, each man is enabled to respond to the call of the Holy Spirit, to return to the Heavenly Father, and to regain those privileges of which he had been deprived by nature. [35]

During the year 1740 to 1741, Wesley and Whitefield almost broke fellowship when the debate between them concerning predestination reached an impasse. The Calvinistically inclined Whitefield upheld the doctrine of predestination to the bitter end. Although good personal relations were restored between the two men after 1741, the whole thing broke out again in 1769.

> At the "Conference" of 1770, Wesley took a strongly Arminian position. Whitefield died that year, but Wesley was fiercely attacked by Augustus Toplady . . . . He was defended by his devoted disciple, the Swiss John William de la Flechere. . . . The effect of these dis-

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34 Wesley, Sermon I, "Salvation through Faith," op. cit., p. 13.

35 Cannon, loc. cit.

cussions was to confirm the Arminian character of Wesleyan Methodism. [36]

Diametrically opposed to any doctrine of immutable decrees, Wesley insisted that saving grace is not restricted or particular, and that it does not rest upon any prior election whatsoever. He could not conceive of any type of predestination, no matter how modified it might be, which did not ultimately lead back to double predestination. To say that God arbitrarily damns certain individuals and redeems others would make all preaching vain, would destroy the very motives of holiness--the hope of future rewards and the fear of punishment, would destroy the comfort of religion as well as the zeal for good works, and, worse than all of these, would ultimately destroy the whole of Christian revelation. [37]

It is significant to note that Wesley does not ascribe to man a free will on the basis of any remains of the imago Dei; it is, to him, a liberty founded altogether upon grace which is universally bestowed by an act of supernatural intervention. [38] Thus there is something within each man besides the attributes of his own nature, a quality which Wesley calls "preventing grace." In this way each man is

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36 Williston Walker, A History of the Christian Church (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1942), p. 516.

37 Cannon, op. cit., pp. 93-97.

38 Lindström, op. cit., pp. 45f.

endowed with a spark of divinity. [39] He believed, therefore, that existentially human nature is a complex paradox of natural and supernatural elements. This fact he felt is the testimony of direct experience, for after conversion the convert is lifted above anything which mere nature can produce. This conversion experience is a concrete demonstration of the mingling of the human and the divine. [40] The conversion to a higher plane, however, is not due to any force resident within human nature, but rather is a direct work of God in response to the willing confession of the convert to his need and desire for such a transformation of life.

The Wesleyan view of human nature may then be said to attempt to conserve the valid elements of both Arminianism and Calvinism. Cell points out that the genius of Wesleyan Arminianism is its synthesis of the faith of the Reformers and the valuable elements of humanism represented by Erasmus and Arminius. Wesley insisted upon the human response, the "will to believe," as the finality of decision and responsibility for the outcome of the Atonement as much as any freedomist had ever dared to assert. On the other hand, his last word was always grace, not freedom. Wesley's statement that grace is free in all (Calvinism) and, at the same time,

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39 Cannon, op. cit., p. 100.

40 Shafer, loc. cit.

free for all (Arminianism) is a concrete example of this unique synthesis. [41]

Such a synthesis was not an easy task, for it involved a dilemma in determining the factor of contingency upon which the distinction between the justified and the unjustified person rests. The first proposition is that grace is universally bestowed. The second is the obvious fact that faith comes from the same source as grace, and to say that God universally bestows the one and not the other is inconsistent. Yet faith cannot be universally bestowed, for if it were, all men would be justified. Empirical evidence plainly indicates that the majority of mankind is not justified. Wesley finds the solution in free human responsiveness. Faith is potentially universal, but it is not actually appropriated until man exercises his "will to believe." The common grace bestowed on all men alike is sufficient to bring them to see the light of the gospel truth, and then it is their individual choice in the matter which determines the outcome. In this sense, Wesley felt that it is legitimate to speak of human initiative and divine response. Not that man can in any degree save himself by moral or ecclesiastical works or by any inherent goodness, rather that man is the sole determining factor in deciding his justification. God bestows or withholds faith on the basis of the human accept-

41 Cell, op. cit., pp. 265, 268f.

ance or rejection of the conditions. [42]

A final word concerning sanctification is necessary to complete this treatment of Wesleyan Arminianism. In the final analysis, Wesley felt that justification is merely a gateway to religion, and that religion itself is a love for God and for all mankind. Faith is only a means to an end; the end is love. A further experience emphasizing the element of Perfect Love is prominent, therefore, in Wesley's teaching. [43] He felt that beyond regeneration is a second definite work of grace whereby original sin or the depravity of human nature can be eliminated and perfect love can become the ruling motive of the Christian life. Thus Wesley made Christian perfection a cardinal emphasis in the Methodist Church. "Wesley believed it possible for a Christian to attain right ruling motives--love to God and to his neighbor --and that such attainment would free him from sin." [44]

> He believed and taught this: that, in an instant, and by a simple act of faith, perfection was "wrought in the soul." It was, indeed, the second of two distinct stages in the Christian experience of Salvation as he conceived it. . . . The second stage . . . is entire sanctification, which comes as an immediate gift of God, entirely cleansing the heart from sin and "slaying the dire root and seed" of it. [45]

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42 Cannon, op. cit., pp. 104f., 113, 117.

43 Ibid., p. 150.

44 Walker, loc. cit.

45 W. E. Sangster, The Path to Perfection (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1943), pp. 87f.

Wesley maintained that a man thus perfected is still subject to human infirmity, ignorance and mistake, but that he is no longer guilty of sin. [46] He was unrelenting in his positive assertion that salvation should be evidenced in a life so dominated by Perfect Love that an active, strenuous and unswerving obedience to God's will would inevitably result.

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46 Ibid., p. 30.

PART II

THE CONTEMPORARY PROBLEM

CHAPTER I. PHILOSOPHICAL AND CULTURAL BACKGROUND

There are two approaches to a study of religion--the philosophical and the scientific. Philosophical inquiry delves into the interpretation and evaluation of the reality to which religion refers. As a specialized branch of philosophy, theology searches for truth in a "cosmic perspective" beneath mere appearances and objective phenomena, whereas the scientific approach is descriptive, depending upon the scientific method of gathering and classifying facts. Science and philosophy cannot be independent of each other but rather are interdependent. Science draws its presuppositions from philosophy, while the latter depends upon science in turn for data and inferences.

Eighteenth century rationalism tended to interpret man and his world in terms of mind. The essence of man was sought through a study of mental processes and reason. Descartes (1595-1650) was one of the leaders of the rationalistic movement. "The existence of the self is the starting point of his constructive effort, while the test of truth is the clearness with which truth justifies itself to the individual reason untrammeled by the past." [1] He attempted to reconcile the mechanistic theories of his day with ideas of

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1 Arthur Kenyon Rogers, A Student's History of Philosophy (revised edition, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1935), p. 236.

God. The only recourse was to a sharp dualism of mind and matter. To matter he applied the most rigid mechanical determinism but to mind he gave freedom of will.

The English Deists reduced the whole of life to perfect mechanical laws. They sought to make religion rational, and to free it from "superstition." The dominant idea that "all nature was governed by law" and that everything in the universe was a product of nature gradually began to emerge. Science thus became of prime interest and the main pursuit of all intellectual endeavor was to gain more scientific knowledge. Man became lost as a cog in the great mechanical universe.

The Romantic movement sought to understand man in terms of his feelings and context. It had a definite distrust of reason and stressed experience. Rousseau shook the philosophical world by revolting against the idea that man was a machine or part of a mechanical universe. Religion was not something of the head, it was from the heart. He urged that nature be given a free hand. Human nature is essentially good and if given sufficient chance and guidance, the saint will emerge. In his famous book, Emile, "the hero of the story is to be permitted to develop in accord with his own nature, without interference." [2] Freedom became Rousseau's

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2 S. E. Frost, Jr., The Basic Teachings of the Great Philosophers (Philadelphia: The Blakiston Company, 1942), p. 247.

watchword; not only freedom from the church but freedom from all the shackles of society. This idea shifts sin from the individual to society, from within man to his environment. Briefly, Rousseau's theory was that there is nothing in man's nature which would hinder him from reaching the highest state of human perfection if he were properly educated and free from all evil institutions.

It has been said that Kant was so overjoyed at the dignity given to man in Émile that he missed his daily walk which was nothing short of miraculous. [3] Kant was stimulated to save man's freedom in a world swept by a craze over science. We cannot know that there is a world outside of our thinking, said Kant, since there is no possible way of knowing whether an outer world, a world of sense, even so much as exists, but "by virtue of reason, [man] can act as though there is an outer world... . ." [4] Thus he felt it was impossible to prove man's freedom of the will in the world of experience but a higher truth than that of science, the moral nature of man, was sufficient as a ground for this thesis.

Two specific reactions against this Kantian idealism took place. The first is Positivism which insists that nothing but phenomena or appearances of things can be known: only that which is perceivable to the external senses can be

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3 Ibid., pp. 161f.

4 Ibid., p. 74.

said to have value as positive knowledge. Four modern outgrowths of this philosophy are: (a) Psycho-physiological parallelism, which identifies bodily and spiritual phenomena in a single series of which there are two aspects, (b) Phenomenalism which acknowledges the phenomena of mind without a real mind from which it comes, (c) Pragmatism which bases all truth on utility and therefore relativism, and (d) Neo-realism which makes the relationship between the psychic and physical a perfect continuity. The other reaction to Kantianism is Materialism, especially in its naturalistic form as found in Darwinian evolution. [5]

In 1871, Darwin's Descent of Man was published and spread throughout the whole of Britain. This theory soon spread to the whole world of scientific thought and caused nothing short of a revolution. Sir Francis Galton, a half-cousin to Darwin, illustrates the way Darwinian naturalism was applied to religious thought. In 1883 he published his book Inquiries into Human Faculty and Its Development, which has been regarded as the foundation of scientific individual psychology and mental testing. This famous book was written in the midst of the heated conflict between the religious agnostics who upheld Darwinian evolution and the supporters of theological dogma. With an air of "objectivity," he con-

5 Paul J. Glenn, The History of Philosophy (St. Louis: B. Herder Book Company, 1929), pp. 247ff.

cluded that there was little if any difference between the lives of Protestants, Catholics, Jews, and agnostics in their relations to humanity or in the calm of living. Galton therefore proceeded to substitute a scientific creed for religious dogma, and elevated the ideal of evolutionary progress as the end toward which men ought to strive, with the superman, not heaven, as the final goal. Boring points out that Galton was prone to view sin as merely a part of man's present defective stage of development, so he measured man in the present not as lord of creation but as the ancestor of a better generation to come. [6]

Most of the philosophers in these movements could be said to belong to that larger, more comprehensive category known as Humanism. This movement was the outcome of a shift from the theocentric philosophy of the Medieval Period with its strict authoritarianism to the anthropocentric and naturalistic philosophy of the present. Elias Andrews, in speaking of the Humanists, says:

> Taking a negative attitude toward the non-physical world, they direct their attention to man and his affairs, with the implication, of course, that since the spiritual world is "unreal" or "unknowable", at least "man" is real and his life has value and is worthy of attention. Man's place in the universe soon takes on new emphasis. He is regarded as capable of realizing the ideal life without supernatural aid; attention is called to his essential goodness; he becomes the standard by which all else is

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6 Edwin G. Boring, A History of Experimental Psychology (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1935), p. 256.

> measured; ethical codes of conduct divorced from ultimate sanctions take the place of rigidly held dogmatic belief about the nature of reality.[7]

The development of science and the naturalistic spirit gave tremendous impetus to the humanistic advance. This spirit is manifested by modern psychology which, reduced to a positive science, attempts to explain all mental states as physiological processes. The "new" psychologists proclaim a new lease on naturalism which can explain the whole of man and his life in terms of psychology.

Willard L. Sperry, in his book What We Mean by Religion, gives an excellent definition of humanism as applied to religion:

> Humanism is religion construed as the sum of a man's right relations to all his fellow men, shorn of the idea that any God, in the traditional meaning of the word, is the premise for the relation or is involved in it as a third partner.[8]

For the most part, the recently originated study known as psychology of religion is in keeping with this point of view. It does not deny that God may be an objective reality, but it does not feel that he can be sufficiently known to be factually established. It is concerned primarily with the organism-environment status rather than a subject-object re-

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7 Elias Andrews, Modern Humanism and Christian Theism (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1939), pp. 17f.

8 Willard L. Sperry, What We Mean by Religion (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1940), pp. 27f.

lationship as insisted upon by historic Christianity.

Dr. Sorokin of Harvard has produced a dialectical survey of the history of culture as the basis for the diagnosis of the present age. Sorokin points out three differing types of culture; the ideational is predominantly other-worldly and religious throughout, oriented to the super-sensory reality of God. This was the prevailing culture of the Medieval Period. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the idealistic culture emerged which was partly other-worldly and religious and partly this-worldly and secular. Finally, the present culture emerged which is this-worldly, secular, and utilitarian. This type of culture is called sensate. It will be noticed that this term coined by Sorokin is essentially synonymous with the term positivistic employed by Herbert Spencer.

Sorokin maintains that these cultures are not compartmentalized into this or that single compartment, but that the dominant culture runs through all of society and effects the philosophy, art, ethics, religion, political science, economics, sociology, and psychology alike as the dominating integrative form or pattern. Thus, for example, the basic foundation upon which modern psychology is built is also to be found as basic to the rest of the natural and social sciences, arts, and philosophy.

When it comes to the realm of truth, Sorokin maintains

the three forms as follows: the ideational period of culture understood truth as that which was revealed by the grace of God--the truth of faith; the idealistic approach to truth included the above, plus the truth accepted through the senses, and made a synthesis of both through reason; but the present sensate culture accepts as truth only what is obtained through the senses. Hence, the organs of sense perception become the highest tribunal in the judgment of truth.

The following statements quoted at length from his book, The Crisis of Our Age, gives an excellent analysis of the present view of truth in our society at its sensory level:

> Any system of sensate truth and reality implies a denial of, or an utterly indifferent attitude toward, supersensory reality or value. Theology and religion as a body of revealed truth are at best tolerated. (p. 86)

> It most strongly favors the study of the sensory world, with its physical, chemical, and biological properties and relationships. Knowledge becomes equivalent to the empirical knowledge represented by the natural sciences. . . . Hence in a sensate society natural science replaces religion, theology, and even speculative philosophy. (p. 87)

> A fully developed sensate system of truth and cognition is inevitably materialistic . . . hence the general tendency . . . to regard the world--even man, his culture, and consciousness itself--materialistically, mechanistically, behavioristically. Man becomes . . . a "complex of electrons and protons," an animal organism, a reflex mechanism, a variety of stimulus-response relationships, or a psychoanalytical "bag" filled with physiological libido. "Consciousness" is declared to be an inaccurate and subjective term for physiological reflexes and overt actions of a certain kind. . . . The social and psychological sciences begin to imitate the

> natural sciences, attempting to treat man in the same way as physics and chemistry treat inorganic phenomena. (pp. 93f.)
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> Psychology, as a science of a human soul, turns out to be a physiology of the nervous system and its reflexes. Religion, as a revelation of God, degenerates into a second-hand "social gospel"--a sort of political creed. Philosophy turns out to be a second-class sensory utilitarian science composed of empiricism, positivism, neo-positivism, pragmatism, criticism, agnosticism, skepticism, instrumentalism, and operationalism--all marked by the same utilitarian and economic traits. (pp. 100f) [9]

Although this mechanistic and materialistic point of view still dominates a great deal of modern science, in its most rabid form it seems to have run its course. On the whole, philosophy and science are taking a dynamic view of the world which synthesizes vitalism and materialism. Nevertheless, Sorokin's picture as presented above is still true, for the new dynamism is not very far removed from the practical consequences described. Although the "new" physics has redefined the term matter in terms of space and energy, the same problems exist. As this concept spreads throughout the realm of thought, the focus of attention is still upon sensory phenomena.

The real point of conflict between religious liberalism whose chief authority is modern science, and orthodox, historic Christianity would be, in the terms used by Sorokin, the clash between the fundamental cultures of either ide-

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9 Pitrim A. Sorokin, The Crisis of Our Age (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., Inc., 1943), pp. 86-100.

ationism or idealism, and sensism. To put it in other words, wherein liberalism and orthodox Christianity do not agree, the cause is the old dilemma and conflict between science and religion.

The connotation of the term religion which causes the fury of some "scientists" is organized, historical, or traditional religion whose sacred texts and dogmas of theology contradict the theories of science. If the Scriptures, dogma, and theology of Christianity could be dismissed and the whole system constructed upon a thoroughly "scientific" basis, built by scientific experimentation, the whole conflict would cease. In other words, when all supernaturalism is removed or at least treated allegorically, the conflict is gone.

In modern philosophy the attempt to dissolve this conflict has taken several directions. The modern idealist no longer thinks of God in the traditional sense but as the Absolute, infinite mind, Hocking's Other Mind, or Montague's panpsychic universal mind, and Lyman's Cosmic Creative Spirit in the evolution of the universe.

Perhaps the most insistent interpretation is the naturalistic-humanistic philosophy of religion represented by Santayana and Dewey, both of whom assert that when there is opposition between religion and science, there is no other reasonable alternative than to discard traditional religion

in favor of science.

For Santayana, science alone can reveal truth about matters of fact. Religion can tell us nothing of the nature of the universe, and only as it has tried to do so has any conflict arisen with science. Religion is poetry with a moral function--poetry "in the sense in which poetry includes all imaginative moral life." "If religion possesses 'truth' in some sense, it is the truth which all mythological poetry has, not literal or factual truth, but symbolic or imaginative or moral truth." [10] Thus the Scriptures are epics just as are Beowulf or the Illiad.

Santayana's God is interpreted as a mere name for man's highest ideal symbolic of perfect truth, beauty, goodness, and the ideal of happiness with no supernatural value at all. Prayer is a spiritual symbolism reminding a person of his ideals and articulating what he prizes most. It "reconciles us to the inevitability of natural forces and reminds us of our limitations in the fact of them." [11] Piety is nothing more than respect for the universal power of all nature.

As with Santayana, John Dewey regards religious value

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10 John Herman Randall, Jr., and Justus Buchler, Philosophy: An Introduction (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1942), p. 284.

11 Ibid., p. 285.

as nothing more than moral value. Religious experience is an attitude or quality in all spheres of human experience and may belong to any experience whether in the field of science, the arts, or morality. He makes a distinction between "religion", which is supernaturalistic, organized, historic religion, and "the religious", which is an attitude or fundamental direction of living directed toward an integrated self. Dogmas of supernaturalistic religion chain the mind to a perspective imposed upon it and destroy the required freedom of insight and the necessary liberation which accompanies the pursuit of unified ideals. [12] Thus "religion" is positively bad.

Faith, for Dewey, is loyalty to the pursuit of ideals and is opposed to the interpretation of faith as found in organized religion. Dewey's faith is born of free inquiry. "He believes that the name 'God' might well be applied to the process which consists in uniting the actual in nature with the possible development of it that we call the ideal. It symbolized , . . the aspiration of man." [13]

He feels that man cannot be religious in isolation. If the ardor of historic religion toward supernaturalism could be directed toward social welfare the fundamental values

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12 Ibid., p. 289.

13 Ibid., p. 290.

and ideals of man would be very nearly achieved. In his Terry Lectures at Yale, entitled A Common Faith, Dewey asserts that the gradual emancipation of religion from the idea of the supernatural would add great impetus to its social value since that idea has unfortunately diverted religious activity from the original social aim. [14]

Thus it can be seen that whenever a conflict has arisen, modern philosophy has nearly always supported science at the expense of religion. Naturalistic humanism, the predominating philosophy, makes the findings of science for the most part the exclusive criteria of truth.

This short sketch was designed to clear the ground with reference to the underlying philosophical presuppositions and the basic type of culture of the present day in order to orient the following survey of the three contemporary schools of religious thought concerning human nature.

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14 Ibid., p. 291.

CHAPTER II. RELIGIOUS LIBERALISM AND HUMAN NATURE

It is essential to any treatment of religious liberalism to realize that "modernism is a method not a creed." [1] There are almost as many different shades of belief as there are adherents to liberalism. [2] Yet, while liberals do not seek to develop a system of theology, much less a confession, there is a unity in their approach to religion. ". . . Modernists, because of unity of point of view and method, may be said to have reached unformulated but none the less common beliefs." [3] The lack of a clear central philosophy, however, makes it difficult to outline these common beliefs in a manner which would be fully acceptable to all who might class themselves as liberal. The following attempt to discover the common denominators in religious liberalism, therefore, is rather presumptuous, and the position defined must not be taken as absolute but as merely typical.

Modern liberalism is rooted in the reaction against the authoritarianism, feudalism, fixity, and dogma of the Medieval period of history. Out of the Renaissance came a rejuvination of the inductive method of reasoning and the con-

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1 Edwin Ewart Aubrey, Present Theological Tendencies (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1936), p. 25.

2 Edwin A. Burtt, Types of Religious Philosophy (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1939), p. 285.

3 Shailer Matthews, The Faith of Modernism (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1925), p. 169.

sequent applications of scientific investigations. The Reformation inspired men to ask bold questions which before were forbidden; it gave them the right to believe what they wished to think; and it gave the individual conscience the leading role in the drama of ethics and religion. The Revolution provided the final liberation from the autocratic social order. [4]

The group who spearheaded the revolutionary movement included among its members none other than the erratic Rousseau. To the basic concept of early liberalism was attached the French-coined word, "Individualism." Mention has already been made in the previous chapter concerning Rousseau's emphasis upon the rediscovery of the individual who had been lost in the anonymous herd. "Individualism, in its best sense, means the discovery and unfolding of all the capacities of each personality. When the uniqueness which makes everyone different is crushed, and swallowed up by the mass, no person is able to live life at its fullest." [5] Hence the emphasis upon revolution whereby workers, slaves, the poor, and others who shared the same fate, might "find themselves;" hence the idealization of "natural man."

In religion it was Frederick Daniel Ernst Schleiermach-

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4 Clarence Russell Skinner, Liberalism Faces the Future (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1937), pp. 19f., 23, 26.

5 Ibid., p. 31.

er (1768-1834) who infused theology with the Romantic ideal. The "father of modern scientific theology," as Schleiermacher has been called, [6] based his view of religion upon individualism. Religion to him was neither doctrine nor ceremony; it was experience centered in the emotional nature of man--the feeling of absolute dependence. This religious feeling, however, must not be interpreted as a mystical absorption in the Infinite. On the contrary, it is based upon the separate existence of the individual, and realizes itself through the contact of the self with the infinite variety of the world. Thus Schleiermacher regarded the ground of religion to be human nature itself. [7]

Samuel Taylor Coleridge held to the position that religious certainty cannot be based upon any external proofs, but finds its authority in religious consciousness. He thus gained for himself the fitting title, "Schleiermacher of England." Shafer, in a keen critical analysis of Coleridge from the literary point of view, indicates that Coleridge "knew from internal evidence that the will is free . . . ." and "if the will is free . . . men have within them not only a power to discover eternal truth, but also a power of origination, even of creation." [8]

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7 Ibid., pp. 161, 163, 167.

8 Robert Shafer, From Beowulf to Thomas Hardy (new edition, New York: The Odyssey Press, 1939-1940), II, 34.

This idealization of human nature was in a large measure mediated to Horace Bushnell (1802-1876) through the influence of Coleridge. Bushnell, in turn, has been called the "Schleiermacher of America" because he, too, "attacked the conception of Christian doctrine as based primarily on demonstration to the intellect . . . and would substitute for such logical proof an appeal to the witness of the religious feeling." [9] The practical application of this principle was infused into American Protestantism through Bushnell's famous publication, Christian Nurture, in which he urged the belief in a quiet unfolding of the Christian nature within a child. He held that it was normal for the child to grow to maturity without ever having known a time when he was not a Christian, rather than to enter the Kingdom of God by way of conversion as taught by the Pietists and the Methodists. [10]

This shift from a theocentric to an anthropocentric emphasis in Christianity produced a revolution in theology. Instead of being the primary Absolute Principle, God was reduced to an aspect of man's religious consciousness. Every tenet of religion was ultimately reduced to empirical principles, and the whole system of belief was determined by its

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9 Williston Walker, A History of the Christian Church (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1942), pp. 545, 584.

10 Horace Bushnell, Christian Nurture (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1896), p. 10.

reference to human experience. Thus,

> when religious experience changes, as it is bound to do, theology will also need to change in order to be true to it . . . in these ways religious doctrines are hypothetical and subject to modification in the light of future experience. [11]

Religious liberalism therefore claims to have released man from the shackles of tradition, doctrine, and authority, and to have at last shown him his rightful place of importance in religion--that of being co-creator of religious values.

The development of modern religious liberalism sketched thus far is in full agreement with Clarence Skinner's contention that liberal philosophy starts with belief in man. "Implied in every emancipation and reform is the truth that man is worth working for and that at the core of human nature is a something sound and good." [12] Such confidence does not acclaim man's perfection nor his freedom from all weakness and failings, but it does inspire faith in three phases of human nature: (1) man's rational ability and sufficiency, (2) his inherent moral capacity to choose what he considers right, and (3) the social ability of man to meet and adjust to the difficulties of shifting and confusing social forces. [13] One implication of this view has already been sufficiently

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11 Burtt, op. cit., pp. 296f.

12 Skinner, op. cit., p. 57.

13 Ibid., pp. 58f.

stated, that confidence in man excludes an appeal to outward or artificial authority. Truth lies inherent within man; "involved in human nature are powers and capacities adequate to the situation." [14]

Burtt significantly states that the main key to the interpretation of Modernism is its "extensive concessions to the dominant intellectual force of contemporary times, modern science." [15] The process has been gradual but sure, and now supernaturalism in all of its forms as held by traditional Christianity is renounced, whereas all events in the world are said to conform to objective and humanly verifiable law. Spinoza and Kant made one philosophical leap, and claimed that the old Christian foundations were no longer defensible and must be abandoned. Religious liberalism, on the other hand, did not revolt in such an open manner; nevertheless, it has arrived at precisely the same position through a process of evolution from its basic premise, namely, that "man is the measure of all things." [16]

The empirical method of interpreting religion makes psychology, sociology, and education to be more reliable guides in religion than theology or the Bible. Upon this ba-

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14 Ibid., p. 64.

15 Burtt, op. cit., p. 287.

16 Ibid., pp. 287f.

sis Adelaide Case states that liberalism refuses "to recognize any incompatibility between science and religion, and . . . insists upon the religious character of scientific investigation itself." [17] Shailer Matthews, in his volume The Faith of Modernism, unhesitatingly says that Modernists assume that scientists know more about nature and man than did any of the theologians who formulated the creeds or confessions. They accept all facts, whether from religious experience or from the laboratory, as data with which to think religiously. As a consequence, the Modernist is "frankly and hopefully an evolutionist because of facts furnished by experts." [18]

The evolutionary hypothesis holds that man, rather than being created as the pinnacle or climax of creation, is a comparative newcomer upon the face of the earth. Rather than being distinct from lower forms of life, he is considered a part of the animal kingdom out of which he has gradually risen during the passing of the ages. A typical evolutionist would maintain that about forty million years ago, at the close of the Mesozoic Era, the Age of Reptiles came to a close and an order of mammals began to evolve known as primates. The biologist classifies man as a primate. The pri-

17 Adelaide Teague Case, Liberal Christianity and Religious Education (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1924), p. 7.

18 Matthews, op. cit., pp. 29f.

mates were quadrupeds and have developed from the lamur and tarsius to New World monkeys and anthropoid apes. [19]

> Finally the primate stock gave rise to a branch which resulted in man. Stated another way, the biologist means that man and the anthropoid apes, at some dim distant day, had a common ancestor, that in turn this common ancestor and the monkey had a common ancestor, and so on back to tree-shews from which the primate stock sprang. [20]

Man, therefore, is not lord of creation or made in the image of God in the traditionally Christian sense, but is the fullest fruition thus far of the animal kingdom, and mirrors the brutes from which he ascended.

The theory of evolution, however, was not confined merely to the field of biology. Hegel constructed a world view based upon an evolutionary hypothesis prior to Darwin's time, and Spencer made evolution the basis of his whole system of philosophy. The general conception of evolution became more and more promising in the thinking of the scientific and philosophical world until the idea that the whole universe is to be understood as an evolutionary process was seriously entertained. The cosmic extension of the theory in both "emergent" and "creative" evolution pictures the universe as a vast process, in which complex entities continually are generated out of simpler antecedents. It is claimed that "all the empirical knowledge at present . . . fits with

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19 David Dietz, The Story of Science (revised, New York: The New Home Library, 1936), p. 324.

20 Loc. cit.

tolerable harmony into such a cosmic scheme." [21] The concept of growth became recognized as the fundamental law of all life. Nothing in the universe, within or without man's life, could be conceived any longer as having sprung up full-statured. Everything achieved maturity by the route of gradual process. The very world itself had thus come into being in a universe which was to be explained on the same basis. "When this idea had firmly grasped the human mind, the modern age had come indeed, and progress was its distinctive category of understanding and its exhilarating phrase of human hope." [22]

Significant for the study of anthropology is the statement of such a cosmic evolutionary view in the recent publication, Human Destiny, by the late Pierre Lecomte du Noüy. Dr. du Noüy begins by relating freedom to the evolutionary view. The animal, he says, has very little if any freedom. All animals are slaves, bound by physiological functions, endocrine secretions, and hereditary instincts. "Animals are, therefore, not free, and this is the symbolical meaning of Genesis when it says that God ordered them to live, to grow, and to multiply." [23] The same determinism

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21 Burtt, op. cit., pp. 304f., 307.

22 Harry Emerson Fosdick, Christianity and Progress (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1922), pp. 31f.

23 Pierre Lecomte du Noüy, Human Destiny (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1948), p. 113.

applies to the first human pair who were created on the sixth creative "day." At that time they appeared in human form, but were as yet conscienceless.

Dr. du Noüy departs from the traditional exegesis of Genesis and makes God responsible for creating a new level of human beings on the eighth day. In the fourth chapter of Genesis this most important event of evolution is described. A discontinuity appears at this time when conscience and freedom are born. By breathing into the "nostrils the breath of life," this new animal "became a living soul," which means that upon him was bestowed conscience and the liberty of choice. Both of these elements were initiated as necessary to this new animal's further evolution. [24]

Animals struggle against nature, but when man emerges as an individual after ten million centuries, just as he is transformed into a different "kind" by the acquisition of freedom, so his struggle is transformed from a struggle against the elements of nature into a struggle "against the remains of the animal within him." [25]

> But, from now on, because of his conscience, it is the individual alone who counts and no longer the species. He will prove that he is the forerunner of the future race, the ancestor of the spiritually perfect man, of which Christ was, in a sense, the premature example, by emerging victorious from the fight. Thus Christ can be

24 Ibid., p. 114.

25 Ibid., p. 116.

> assimilated to one of the intermediary transitional forms, perhaps a million years in advance of evolution, who came amongst us to keep us from dispair, and to prove to us that our efforts can and must succeed. He in truth died for us, for had He not been crucified, we would not have been convinced. [26]
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> Evolution continues in our time, no longer on the physiological or anatomical plane but on the spiritual and moral plane. [27]

Liberal Christianity found a champion for a type of Biblical interpretation which parallels that of du Noüy in the person of Harry Emerson Fosdick. Fosdick published A Guide to Understanding the Bible nearly ten years prior to the publication of Human Destiny. Fosdick points out that the distinction of the Hebrew-Christian development of thought about man lies in the affirmation of boundless value and possibility in personality, and in the faith that God and the universe are pledged to the satisfaction of personality's demands. He then indicates that the facts of the evolutionary and materialistic theories, as well as the brutality of social life, seem to discredit the Hebrew-Christian ideal. He concludes that, in a day when behaviorism and coercive collectivism are not wholly unpopular, it might be well to remember that they were primitive ideas in the Hebrew-Christian development, which "for nearly two millenniums . . . engaged in breaking free from their im-

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26 Loc. cit. et seq.

27 Ibid., p. 104.

poverishing effects." [28]

> At the beginning, a physical organism, whose life-principles were breath and blood, whose mental and emotional experiences were the functions of bodily organs, the ordinary man was submerged in the corporate mass of his tribe, without individual status, separate hopes, personal rights, or claim on divine care apart from the group. In the end, an immortal being, endowed with capacity for moral living and divine fellowship, man stood distinct from the mass, possessing in personality the supreme value, having separate status and individual rights of his own, and gifted alike with the privilege of sonship to God and the responsibility of an eternal destiny. [29]

The scientific emphasis has led to the interpretation of God as immanent within human experience--a "new humanism." [30] Most liberal Christians are not ready to discard completely the traditions of Christianity to the extent of becoming radical humanists; nevertheless, the idea of the transcendence of God finds little acceptance among them. God is seen as working himself in and through man's developmental processes. The sharp distinction between God and the world disappears; "God" becomes a term for the world process. "God, therefore, . . . is not a person distant from ourselves; on the contrary our life is a part of His." [31] Coe says that God is immanent in all of man's choices, taking

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28 Harry Emerson Fosdick, A Guide to Understanding the Bible (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1938), p. 97.

29 Ibid., p. 94.

30 Aubrey, op. cit., p. 43.

31 J. Gresham Machen, Christianity and Liberalism (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1923), p. 63.

the form of a choice within man's choices and making him more and more personal. [32]

This view of God has immediate bearing upon the conception of human nature. Coe throws further light upon this relationship as follows: "Experimentation directed toward increased self-realization or enfranchisement of persons, then, is the method of apprehending the divine presence." [33] In other words, the way to know God is to "know thyself." It inevitably follows that that self must be essentially good, or else "God" must be re-defined.

It was inevitable that liberalism, with its scientific and anthropocentric emphasis, should rely heavily upon the modern science of human nature, psychology. Skinner points out that another implication arising from the liberal's premises is integration. This magic concept of liberalism is derived from psychology and arises as a protest against the departmentalization of personality into unrelated units. Not only is this concept applied psychologically, but it is a key to modern sociological idealogy as well. "Integration, then, is pivotal in a modern philosophy, whether it is in terms of personal living or social system." [34] Ethics,

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32 George Albert Coe, What is Religious Education? (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929), p. 94.

33 Ibid., p. 285.

34 Skinner, op. cit., p. 65.

business, religion, science, the nation, and internationalism must all be properly related or integrated before the "fullness of life" can be realized. Because a liberal believes in man's inherent ability to integrate his life and to find the proper solution to his problems, he is logically led to a further belief, that of unities or universals. In a word, the mind is emancipated from the bigotries and prejudices of the past, and a unifying principle is seen at work in all forms of life regardless of the level. For instance, the many functions of the organism are unified on the physiological level; each individual creates within himself a dependable, consistent character or personality on the intellectual level; and on the social level groups and compounded groups become co-ordinated. [35] The religions of mankind should be united, according to this view, with none claiming to be unique or superior. "The liberal proclaims unity as a basic postulate, which explains the human mind, society, and the universe. The promotion of unity is the passion of liberalism." [36]

The importance of psychology to religious liberalism demands further attention. The basis of modern psychology of religion is to be found in Schleiermacher's emphasis upon

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35 Ibid., pp. 58ff.

36 Ibid., p. 73.

the feelings, although most modern psychologists would not limit themselves to this view. The specific needs for food, shelter, companionship, acheivement, and the like, all play a part in man's quest for satisfaction; nevertheless, none of these can be said to be distinctively religious. Over and above these specific needs, however, is a comprehensive need for integrating the impulses, emotions, sentiments, interests, and ideas into a coherent unity. An inner wholeness is a necessary prerequisite to a proper response to the wholeness without. Man must have an organized personality, and the failure to have a consciously unified self constitutes the sense of "sin." Likewise, the experience of "redeeming grace" is the achievement of this integration. [37] "Integration is a magic word today, having almost usurped the older ecclesiastical key words such as 'salvation' or 'faith.'" [38]

Several traditional terms are still used by modern psychologists of religion, but whatever supernaturalistic overtones may have been connected with them is discarded. For instance, "conversion" is a common term in modern psychology, but it does not mean that a transcendent God transforms the human life in a manner conceived by older theology. Conversion, to the religious liberal, may be any changing of

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37 Burtt, op. cit., pp. 332f.

38 Skinner, op. cit., p. 65.

the course of life. It is as varied as life itself, for life has multiple ways of reorientation. Any genuine conversion is "a true solution in which former conflicts are released into the harmony and unity of integrated personality." [39] In short, it is a birth of a new self--the time when a person comes to "know himself."

Another traditional term is that of "re-birth." For the psychologist there are many rebirths from the cradle to the grave. In fact, every new experience in life is a rebirth, and conversion to religious integration is just one of myriads of rebirths in the experience of the average human being. Natural growth is contingent upon these 'rebirths;' the normal process of maturization would be impossible without them. [40]

Since this whole process is based upon natural means and the supernaturalistic elements considered so essential to traditional Christianity are discarded, why do many religious liberals still consider themselves to be Christian? Because it has been found experimentally by many Christians that the most effective way to attain to the goal of a unified personality is through a commitment to the ideals of Christianity and through a personal loyalty to its Founder. Christ

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39 Paul E. Johnson, Psychology of Religion (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1945), p. 104.

40 Ibid., pp. 91ff.

need not be considered supernatural to become one with him in spirit and purpose. [41] Salvation is thus merely a process of "un-selfing," when the "convert" loses himself in active sympathy with the world of other persons and thereby in reality "finds himself" as an integrated personality. [42] Matthews claims that Modernism is really the pure Christianity because Jesus Christ, the Savior, and not dogma or the Bible is the center of faith. When dogma about Christ is brushed aside, Jesus, the historic person who gives God to men, becomes the center of faith, and action in accordance with his life and teaching becomes the way of salvation. [43]

Attention has already been called to the liberal concept of the essential goodness of natural man. More than this should be said, however, concerning the natural state of human nature. Any imperfection which might be noticed is not sin, but is due to defect in evolutionary development. If anything might be called analogous to sin it is the "survival or misuse of habits and tendencies that were incidental to earlier stages of development." [44] This view is clearly stated by James Bissett Pratt who says that many violent impulses are inherited from man's animal ancestory which are

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41 Burtt, op. cit., p. 334.

42 Johnson, op. cit., p. 105.

43 Matthews, op. cit., p. 144.

44 Wilder R. Reynolds, The Human Problem (Berne, Indiana: Economy Printing Concern, n.d.), p. 21.

not sinful in themselves but are capable of becoming sinful if and when they are allowed to usurp authority over the life. The instincts are not sinful except under certain conditions when they become master instead of servant, or when they are misguided. From Adam and the long line of human as well as animal ancestory is inherited, not sin, but a complex nature, which, in a complex environment, inevitably leads to sinful as well as virtuous acts. But it is only the weakness and inner conflict which is inherited, not the sinfulness.[45]

William Adams Brown is in agreement with this theory that finds occasion for sin in the course of human evolution as the conflict between the higher and lower natures. He would add, however, the partial truth of two other views of sin. The dualist states a truth when he maintains that social influence must be taken into account as well as the purely individualistic explanation of the genesis of sin, and historic theology makes a valid contention that neither the animal instinct nor the social environment fully exhaust the explanation of sin, for "whatever else may be necessary to account for sin, whether of inward tendency or outward environment, it becomes known and judged as sin only through that self-identification of the person which is revealed in

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45 James Bissett Pratt, Can We Keep the Faith? (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1941), p. 107.

choice." [46] Even though Brown is willing to be concessive to historic theology to an extent, he still makes no mention of the idea of the Fall or Original Sin in explaining the origin and nature of sin.

Harrison S. Elliott explains the origin of sin on the basis of the modifiability of human nature. He holds to the idea that man's original nature is not predisposed to either good or evil, but is amoral in this sense. Whether the "divine" or the "demonic" finally emerges in the maturation process depends upon the particular experiences of life to which that original nature is subjected. In other words, human nature is very plastic, and whether or not it finally becomes "saintly" or "depraved" will depend upon the educative process. [47] Thus sinfulness is not necessary, and it is a mistake to call it universal. Along this same line, Emme and Stevick point out that each individual possesses a God-given capacity for religion, and that the social environment is charged with the task of furnishing the proper conditions if that capacity is to be developed. They add that these conditions rest upon the educative process; religion not only can, but must be taught. [48]

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46 Brown, op. cit., p. 276.

47 H. S. Elliott, Can Religious Education be Christian? (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1940), p. 191.

48 Earle Edward Emme and Paul Raymond Stevick, An Introduction to the Principles of Religious Education (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1926), p. 22.

The emphasis upon a "teaching church" or religious education can be traced to Bushnell who felt that proper training and nurture would prevent the consciousness of sin from ever arising in the person's mind. [49] H. S. Smith indicates the centrality of the doctrine of growth in Bushnell's thought. Bushnell felt that all moral and religious progress would come by a process of gradual growth or moral evolution. Consequently, he viewed all revolutionary and catastrophic change as a blight on the course of progress, including any reference to crisis conversions. [50]

The general position of religious liberalism toward the sufficiency of the educative process has been well summarized as follows:

> Directly opposed to the program aimed at sudden conversion is that of the religious educationalists, who accepted the findings of science as to human nature and the mixed moral tendencies of human inheritance. They believe that the tendencies which naturally lead to wrong-doing need to be suppressed, and that this can be done wisely by a planned program of education. They believe that all good tendencies need to be stimulated and set at work through natural avenues of expression and thus crystallized into character, and that this can best be done by a proper program of education. [51]

A more recent impetus to this concept of education and

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49 Cf. Bushnell, loc. cit.

50 Hilrie Shelton Smith, Faith and Nurture, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1942), pp. 10f.

51 George Herbert Betts and Marion O. Hawthorne, Method in Teaching Religion (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1925), p. 46.

growth in religion was mediated in a circular manner to religious liberalism from John Dewey. Life, according to Dewey, can be spelled out as e-d-u-c-a-t-i-o-n. To Dewey, education can be considered growth--reconstructing experience after experience, proceeding from the level attained by one experience to succeeding levels, until the summum bonum (socialization or as near to it as possible) is reached. Thus education is to be viewed as fundamentally a social process which culminates in democracy. Dewey redefines religion by making the moral and the social to be synonymous. [52]

George Albert Coe, who is considered by many to be America's most distinguished philosopher of religious education, [53] applied this social theory to religious education. He says that the aim of Christian Education in the light of this social idealism is the "growth of the young toward and into mature and efficient devotion to the democracy of God, and happy self-realization therein." [54] No distinction is made between human society and divine society in his concept of the Kingdom of God, alias the "democracy of God." In keeping with the liberal trend toward immanentism, the King-

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52 John Dewey, Democracy and Education (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1922), note especially chapters 2, 4, and 7.

53 Smith, op. cit., p. 27.

54 George Albert Coe, A Social Theory of Religious Education (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1917), p. 55.

dom of God is not viewed as spiritual or other-worldly; it is an earthly, social affair. Democracy is the ideal form for this Christian social community. The conclusion is inevitable, therefore; to become socialized or democratic is to become to that extent a mature Christian.

Coe was appalled at the finality conservative theologians attached to the Christian faith. He felt that Christian education had a definite task in revealing to the learner the unfinished character of the Kingdom. It should be presented as a process in which each learner must form judgments of his own concerning the present and future of religion and life. This realization will turn him away from comfortable convention or repose in the authority of dogma, and will unite him with his fellows on the basis of the forward look instead of a backward or introspective perspective; "and it will give him the thrill, during his growing years, of being a co-creator with God." [55]

Coe maintains that if loyalty to Jesus is not to be merely a vague sentimental admiration for unfocalized goodness, the learner must discover in Christ some active, creative, and inexhaustible spring of the spirit which is also to be found in every man, including himself. There is that deep well in the spirit which is common to Jesus and mankind

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55 George Albert Coe, What is Religious Education? (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929), p. 94.

in general; it is ethical love or regard for personality. "The loyalty of the Christian, accordingly, is loyalty not to one person, even Jesus, but to persons." [56] Therefore, "to bring all men everywhere to themselves, and in this process to find our own selves by remaking ourselves--this is education, and this is the work of the Kingdom of God." [57]

Coe and his fellow religious educators would emphatically deny that such a view of the Kingdom of God is so anthropocentric that God is nearly ruled out. The Kingdom is for Coe a fellowship which includes both the divine and the human aspects. Yet when the idea of the Kingdom is elaborated, the divine features are either left unmentioned or obscure, whereas the social and human side is clearly and vigorously depicted. This apparent neglect of the divine element is understood when seen from his view of an immanent God. According to this view, human fellowship is impossible without experiencing both the divine and the human at one and the same time. Thus to define the Kingdom as a society of persons implies a fellowship which is both human and divine. [58]

Skinner aptly summarized the credo of liberalism in the great word--confidence. This does not mean a romantic

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56 Ibid., pp. 181f.

57 Ibid., p. 227.

58 Smith, op. cit., pp. 38f.

sentimentality so often connected with the overworked and misunderstood expression "optimism." It is something more serious and deep rooted than that. It is an expression of confidence in the forces at work in the universe and in man which make for the stability of the good, the true, and the just, and which forever battle evil in whatever form it may take. [59]

Two major catastrophies, however, have occurred in man's world since the turn of the century, which in some measure have shaken this confidence. World War I was a bit disconcerting, but in the end it was used by many religious liberals to justify the use of the concept--democracy. "The first World War served only to enhance the value of this term, since the professed purpose of that conflict was to establish democracy universally." [60] The heinous degeneracy manifested by the perpetrators of World War II was not so easily by-passed. This last conflict revealed too vividly the shocking depths to which human nature might sink. The massacre and destruction of Europe was enough to cast some doubt upon the benevolent forces at work in nature and man.

> Perhaps the most serious thing that has happened in the modern world is man's loss of faith in his own capacity for peace. When that goes, the fight for liberalism cannot flourish in a culture which has no respect

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59 Skinner, op. cit., p. 81.

60 Smith, op. cit., p. 35.

> for personality, which does not have confidence in human nature's capacity to solve its problems, and which declares that freedom is a rotten corpse. [61]

Religious liberals have been made to think seriously and to re-examine their tenets. It is the general conviction of many liberals that the present moment is a supreme crisis in the history of liberalism. Either the liberalism of the past will emerge outmoded and unadaptable to the extent that it will be gradually outgrown, or it will have a new birth, taking on a new adaptability. [62] In spite of apparent reverses, in spite of the growing popularity of a movement of reaction, religious liberalism looks to the future for vindication.

A recent article by Willard L. Sperry succinctly illustrates the attitude of a "sadder but much wiser" liberalism. Says Sperry, by the end of the first quarter of this century, historic liberalism had lost much of its prestige. August 4, 1914, marked the end of the epoch. The liberal is out of fashion today, and he knows it; and furthermore, he is frankly puzzled by what has happened to himself and his world. "The modern liberal is using these perplexing and humiliating years as a salutary occasion for self-examination and self-criticism." [63]

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61 Skinner, op. cit., p. 146.

62 Ibid., p. 124.

63 Willard L. Sperry, "Liberalism and Neo-Orthodoxy," Religion in Life, XVI, (Summer Number, 1947), p. 324.

Sperry probes into the problem by asking, "What is meant by 'liberalism'?" Its first axiom is human freedom. The modern liberal has discovered that man does not have the absolute liberty that earlier liberalism ascribed to him, but in the area where it matters most, in the spiritual life, man is still considered free. The second axiom in liberalism is confidence in human nature. "The average citizen has not been so good a man as the theory said he would be," [64] however, and the present day liberal must concede that the liberals of former days "overbid their hand" in behalf of man's native excellence. Even though man, when left to his own promptings, betrayed the trust in his benevolence, the post-war liberal refuses to accept the neo-orthodox reaction which disparages human reason and denies freedom. " . . . the truth about human nature seems . . . probably to lie somewhere between liberalism and neo-orthodoxy." [65]

Sperry admits that the liberal has probably overstated his case, but the movement of reaction, neo-orthodoxy, in the swing to the opposite extreme, is already overstating its case, and in turn is inviting a fresh liberal reaction. The liberal position is therefore worth holding "for the sake of the total cause at some as yet undated future." [66]

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64 Ibid., p. 331.

65 Ibid., p. 335.

66 Ibid., p. 334.

With this significant statement by a leading liberal thinker, the stage is set for an examination of that movement of reaction--Dialectical Theology.

CHAPTER III. DIALECTICAL THEOLOGY

The previous section of this paper was primarily concerned with developing the position of religious liberalism as related to the Romantic movement. Contemporary with Schleiermacher, however, was a rationalist par excellence, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, whose system of thought was also basic to the liberal point of view.

Hegel was an ardent admirer of Kant. He discarded the Kantian epistemological dualism, however, with its antithesis of noumenal and phenomenal, and regarded ultimate reality monistically. Hegel reduced everything to the manifestation of a single principle--the Absolute. In a word, God is not behind all experience, he is in all experience. The entire universe, in all of its intricate and complex forms, is a mighty process "whose substance is the coming to consciousness of the Absolute." [1] Therefore, human reason is but a mode of the infinite reason, and another name for the mind of God is "the sum of all finite consciousness." [2]

Human thought as well as the whole world process can be summed up in the dialectical movement of analysis (thesis and antithesis) and synthesis. "Given this simple formula,

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1 William Adams Brown, The Essence of Christianity (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913), pp. 188f.

2 Loc. cit.

Hegel will build you the universe." [3]

The essence of religion, as of everything else, is rational. The principle of continuity reaches its supreme expression in this system; everything is based upon the single principle, reason. Just as Schleiermacher defined religion as absolute feeling, so Hegel defined it as absolute knowledge. Religion is, therefore, the function of the human spirit through which man understands everything else; it is the function through which "the Absolute comes to full self-consciousness"--the union in thought of the finite and the infinite. [4] To the Hegelian there is no distinction between "natural" and "special" revelation, for the whole of religion is reduced to the "natural," and Christianity is the crown of natural religion. [5]

The end result of this source of religious liberalism is identical with that which is described in the preceeding chapter--an almost exclusive stress upon scientific data in religion, upon divine immanence in the world of experience, upon the dependability of human reason, upon the inherent goodness of human nature, and upon the fact that no human concepts can be regarded as final since they are but relative statements of Divine truth. It was against these tenets

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3 Ibid., p. 192.

4 Ibid., p. 193.

5 Ibid., p. 222.

that Søren Kierkegaard, the Danish philosopher who has been called the "father of Dialectical Theology," [6] reacted. Almost a century ago, Kierkegaard caused a stir in Danish Protestantism by revolting against the whole Hegelian system, "and it is this revolt against the early Hegelianism which explains his significance in the contemporary theological revolt against Neo-Hegelianism" on the part of Neo-Orthodoxy. [7] Whereas Descartes, the "father" of modern philosophy, began his thought with a doubt, Kierkegaard began his thought with a concrete personal despair, in which he questioned the meaning and truth of every aspect of human life. The result was a revision of the basic categories of existence. He followed the method of existential thinking in which the thinker seeks to understand himself as an existing human being, and seeks to think concretely with reference to the particular something which he seeks to apprehend. The abstract method employed by Descartes and adapted by Hegel, proceeds by way of abstracting from the thinker and the concrete situation and explaining reality in general. The task of existential thinking, to which Kierkegaard devoted himself, was by far the more difficult, for it meant that the thinker must seek to understand what it means to him that

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6 Edwin Ewart Aubrey, Present Theological Tendencies (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1936), p. 60.

7 Ibid., p. 66.

this particular thing is a reality. [8]

The Hegelian dialectic was well suited to the contemplation of the world process, but the existential dialectic is relevant to the observer who thinks of the future as an active participant. The relativism of the Hegelian dialectic refuses to admit any absolute oppositions:

> and this is the reason why the Hegelian dialectic registers a compromise or synthesis of opposites which is supposed to preserve the essence of both while annihilating them in their separateness; its watchword is: "both-and." [9]

On the other hand, the existential dialectic presupposes qualitative distinctions and absolute disjunctions which can never be mediated; "its watchword is therefore: 'either-or.'" [10]

> When the "both-and" point of view comes to dominate existence as well as contemplation, it is the death of spirit; "either-or is the key to heaven," says Kierkegaard with epigrammatic incisiveness, "both-and is the road to hell." When the individual takes himself out of existence and contemplates himself as he is, statically, he perceives that he is both good and bad. But when he again plunges into existence and confronts the future ethically, he cannot become both good and bad at the same time, but he must move either in the one direction or in the other. [11]

In this manner, Kierkegaard breaks with the principle of continuity and relativity, and insists upon the inevitable

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8 David F. Swenson, Something About Kierkegaard (revised and enlarged edition, Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1945), pp. 111ff.

9 Ibid., p. 119.

10 Loc. cit.

11 Loc. cit. et seq.

disjunctive and absolute nature of existential thinking. Swenson points out that when the truth of Kierkegaard's system breaks in upon the soul, a greater change than the Copernican revolution is brought about, for the thinker suddenly discovers that it is not so much he that cross-examines existence, as it is existence which cross-examines him. [12]

Hence, even though Kierkegaard cannot be accused of being strictly Kantian, his system requires an epistemological dualism closely akin to that of Kant.

The philosophy of Kierkegaard contained three or four basic elements: In the first place, he was thoroughly disturbed by Hegel's implication of man's self-reliance and estimation of himself as an embodiment of God. When man lays aside this "rationalization of human egotism," he suddenly realizes his inadequacy and plunges into pessimistic dispair. Second, Kierkegaard was entirely out of sympathy with the social emphasis which had become basic to the Christianity of his day. "Hence the position of Kierkegaard is frequently referred to as "existential ethical individualism." [13] He felt that retreat into the crowd was a retreat into rationality, whereas God is beyond reason, and the tests of rationality cannot be tests of religious truth. The third basic principle of Kierkegaard was, therefore, this reaction

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12 Ibid., p. 126.

13 Aubrey, op. cit., p. 67.

against rational religion. Rather than holding, as did Hegel, that man moves from his reason to God, he insists that God alone can come to man, and that this revelation is so far removed from man's rationality that it is tantamount to being irrational. Consequently, Christian truth presents itself as a series of paradoxes to human reason. Finally, even though Kierkegaard protected Hegel's system as "done in a fine manner," he revolted against the subjectivism of both Hegel and Schleiermacher. He based his whole system of thought upon God as objective, even though knowledge of him is subjective or through faith alone. He felt that man's origin and true knowledge of himself are explicable only upon this theocentric basis. [14]

Kierkegaard undoubtedly influenced the Existenz-Philosophie of Heidegger and Jaspers; nevertheless, his personal revolt against the system of his day was largely a localized phenomenon for the remainder of the nineteenth century. It was not until 1909-1911 that his works were translated into German. The translation at this particular time was strategic, however, for the war and postwar situation in Germany added tremendous appeal to his philosophy. Immediately after the first war, Karl Barth, one time ardent proponent of social idealism, startled the theological world with The Epistle to the Romans (an attempted reconstruction of the message rather

14 Ibid., pp. 66-73.

than an ordinary commentary) which reflected the disillusionment not only in the spiritual life of postwar Germany, but the political, social, and economic bankruptcy as well. With this small volume a revolution in theology began, even though the movement was rather insignificant for nearly two decades, in fact so insignificant that Edwin Burtt relegated it to a minor place in his volume, Types of Religious Philosophy, published in 1939. Today another postwar era of disillusionment has placed this reaction in a dominant position. When Dialectical theologians such as Barth, Brunner, Pauck, Tillich, the Niebuhrs, Hemrighausen, Haroutunian, and Mackay speak, most of the theological world pauses to listen at least with respect.

A preliminary general statement concerning Barthianism might be helpful as a setting for the specific treatment of anthropology. In the first place, Barthianism is a theology of absolutism which revolts against the relativism of the modern attitude of mind, especially positivism and idealism in all forms. Characteristic of this theology is a fundamental pessimism which is strikingly antithetical to the optimistic self-confidence of scientific theology. In contrast to the modern tendency of many a church to let "its certainty of salvation sparkle in the sun like jewels," this new theology conceals everything that might appear to be certain, and in its place is substituted a deep despair of faith.

"Thus the empirical human being, in his relation to God, can be nothing but a pauper, the lifeless clay that has nothing and must receive life and possessions as a gift." [15] Such words sound strangely reminiscent of Reformed theology of Luther and Calvin.

Furthermore, Crisis theologians call the church back from promulgating social work to the preaching of the Word. Barthianism once again proposes to raise the fundamental question of the Reformation, "What does Jesus Christ say to his church?" not "What does the world say?" Its contrast with religious liberalism is nowhere more evident than in the major emphasis of both positions: anthropocentric liberalism and theocentric neo-orthodoxy. Barth and his followers constantly proclaim the primacy of the divine will. The transcendence of God is stressed and immanence is emphatically denied. God is the Totally Other. [16] He is revealed only through his Word. The Scriptures in themselves do not constitute God's Word; it is rather the written and preached word through which the Spirit mediates the Word. Man and God are at opposite points in the Barthian dialectic. Knowledge through faith is substituted for scientific knowledge in the realm of the spiritual life and theology, for this

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15 Adolf Keller, Karl Barth and Christian Unity (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1933), pp. 29f.

16 Ibid., pp. 44f.

latter can never reveal anything concerning the Unattainable or the Totally Other. For Barth, ultimate truth is only that which corresponds to God, or at least is in agreement with him, and which can be known through revelation alone. [17]

Total depravity and a complete lack of human ability are cardinal points in Barth's anthropology. The Augustinian determinism lies behind the whole of his theology. As a matter of fact, even Augustine and Calvin never went to the extreme that Barth does in picturing an uncompromising transcendentalism. For him, "God is Supreme Sovereign of the world, who speaks to man in his Word (the Bible) but who is entirely separated from and discontinuous with human thought and experience." [18] Such a view inevitably reduces the importance of man to a minimum. Man has absolutely no power within himself to approach God; the "encounter" between God and man takes place when God comes to man by breaking into temporal experience from another realm of a qualitatively different "kind."

Barth went to some excesses with which all of his students and followers have not always been in agreement. In fact, the last word cannot be given concerning Neo-Orthodoxy,

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17 Ibid., p. 55.

18 Edwin A. Burtt, Types of Religious Philosophy (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1939), p. 434. Italics my own.

for it is as yet rather undefined at many points, and there is considerable disagreement within the "feld" at other points. For example, the Kierkegaardian and Barthian emphasis upon the qualitative difference between the natural and the supernatural leads them to say that the imago Dei is completely destroyed in man and that natural theology or general revelation are concepts which simply do not correspond to reality. It is a fundamental premise with Barth that "no knowledge of God exists in the world save in the hearts of regenerate Christian believers." [19] Thus there is no Ansprechbarkeit between the Christian gospel and human nature, and whenever that gospel is preached, rather than fixing upon something which already exists in man, it replaces all that was in man by something totally new. "The soul of the Christian is thus in the most exact sense a creation de novo." [20] Barth accepts the doctrine that man was originally created in the similitude of God, but he unequivocally asserts that this imago Dei was totally defaced by the Fall so that not so much as a trace can now be found, and nothing but a wholly new creative act can produce the power of responsiveness to God. Man is still a man, Barth admits, and not a cat; nevertheless, his humanity has been so corrupted by sin that "no more than a cat is he

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19 John Baillie, Our Knowledge of God (London: Oxford University Press, 1946), p. 17.

20 Ibid., p. 19.

able to hear God's voice until, through faith in Christ, the image and similitude of God are created in him afresh." [21]

> And with the rest of his human nature his reason also has been totally corrupted, so that since the Fall we are all, in a phrase which Dr. Barth quotes with approval from Calvin, mente alienati, that is to say, insane. . . . Prior to the acceptance by faith of the Christian revelation man has no capacity whatever for the reception of revelation, the capacity to receive it being given in and with the revelation itself. [22]

Baillie aptly summarizes this position by saying that Barth makes the view of the image of God impressed upon man at creation merely an archeological fact--a something which once existed, but which has since disappeared, leaving no trace upon modern man. [23] In this respect Barth proves to be more radical than even the Reformed tradition, for Calvin says, "the image of God includes all the excellence in which the nature of man surpasses all the other species of animals." [24]

Barth stands as a solitary figure among the Dialectical theologians in this respect, for even his most illustrious pupil, Emil Brunner, deviates from his teacher's stand on the totally lost imago Dei. Upon the doctrine of creation Brunner and Barth agree that God created in man something special, that man is "one excellent creature above all others,

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21 Loc. cit. et seq.

22 Ibid., p. 20.

23 Ibid., p. 22.

24 John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, n.d.), I, 208.

whose distinctive feature is that in some sense he is similar to the Creator." [25] The New Testament transforms this concept of the imago Dei, however, from a static characteristic to a concept of relation. The New Testament does not mean to imply that man has lost that which makes him essentially a person as distinct from the subhuman, but it does mean that "the Imago Dei is no longer a human characteristic which God once for all impressed upon man at the time of his creation; rather, it is now something which originates in Christ and man actually being face to face. . ." [26] Of this Brunner writes:

> I agree with Barth in teaching that the original image of God in man has been destroyed, that the justitia originalis has been lost and with it the possibility of doing or even of willing to do that which is good in the sight of God, and that therefore the free will has been lost. [27]

Rather than discarding the imago en toto, as Barth has done, Brunner divides the image of God into two aspects: one formal and the other material. The formal sense of the concept is that which makes man essentially human and distinguishes him from the rest of creation regardless of whether

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25 Heinrich Emil Brunner, The Divine-Human Encounter (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1943), p. 127.

26 Ibid., p. 130f.

27 Heinrich Emil Brunner, Nature and Grace (English translation of Natur und Gnade: Zum Gespräch mit Karl Barth with the reply, Nein!, by Karl Barth appearing in one volume entitled, Natural Theology, London: Geoffrey Blees, Ltd., The Centenary Press, 1946), p. 22.

or not he is a sinner. This formal element gives to man a superiority in creation and signifies that God created him for the special purpose of bearing His image. "This function or calling as a bearer of the image is not only not abolished by sin; rather it is the presupposition of the ability to sin and continues within the state of sin." [28] Thus, even as a sinner, man is responsible before God. Materially, however, the imago was completely lost in the Fall. "Man is a sinner through and through and there is nothing in him which is not defiled by sin." [29]

Since, therefore, man still bears the formal element of his original creation in the image of God, and God leaves the imprint of his nature upon whatever he does, the creation of the world must be considered a revelation and self-communication of God. Brunner contends that nowhere does the Bible deny that through sin man's ability to perceive the works of God is destroyed. Rather the Bible does maintain that sin makes man blind to what is visibly set before him, and that is the reason men are guilty and responsible before God--they will not know the Creator who has manifested himself so clearly to them. [30] The important aspect of this formal

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28 Ibid., p. 23.

29 Ibid., p. 24.

30 Ibid., p. 25.

element of the image is man's receptivity. God finds his point of contact with man on this basis: the "capacity for words and responsibility." [31] This "addressability" as Baillie puts it, [32] or "possibility of being addressed" as Fraenkel translates it, [33] is connected with the "natural" knowledge of God. Had man lost his consciousness of God entirely the Word of God could never reach him. It is true that natural man's knowledge of God is very confused and distorted; nevertheless, it is an indispensable point of contact for divine grace. [34] To all of this, Karl Barth replies with an emphatic "Nein!"

In speaking of the image of God, Reinhold Niebuhr refers to the Augustinian conception that the imago includes man's rational faculties but also goes beyond them. "Self-transcendence" is the best term to designate this capacity; man is more than merely a rational creature, for he reaches beyond himself, lifting himself above himself as a living organism who can make the total temporal and spatial world, including himself, the object of knowledge. [35] He hastens

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31 Ibid., p. 31.

32 Baillie, op. cit., p. 29.

33 Brunner, op. cit., p. 32.

34 Loc. cit. et seq.

35 Reinhold Niebuhr, The Nature and Destiny of Man: A Christian Interpretation (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1931), I, 162.

to add, however, that the doctrine of man as creature must be in juxtaposition to the doctrine of man in the imago Dei in order to fully understand the Christian doctrine of man. [36]

Regardless of the relationship between the present state of man and the original imago Dei, there is general agreement that, in his present state, man is a sinner. How does this happen to be? In speaking of original righteousness, Niebuhr dispenses with the historical-literalistic illusion which places the original perfection of man in a period prior to an historical Fall. [37] Niebuhr places the consciousness of "original righteousness" within each person in a moment of the self which transcends history, although it is not outside of the self which is in history. Perfection prior to the "Fall" is perfection before the action of the vain and anxious self to form an idolatrous world-meaning of its own. Thus, Adam was sinless before he acted, but his sinfulness came to light when he proceeded with his first significant action. This is symbolical for the whole human history. The original righteousness of man stands outside the pale of history, but it is in the man who is in history; and, when sin comes, as it is bound to do with his first self-assertive action, it actually borrows from the original righteousness. The pretension of sin creates the illusion that it is not in

36 Ibid., p. 166.

37 Ibid., p. 276.

history, but is a deed of eternity. [38]

> Christian theology has found it difficult to refute the rationalistic rejection of the myth of the Fall without falling into the literalistic error of insisting upon the Fall as an historical event. . . . When the Fall is made an event in history rather than a symbol of an aspect of every historical moment in the life of man, the relation of evil to goodness in that moment is obscured. [39]

Brunner also feels that there can be no finality comparable to the literalistic interpretation of the doctrine of the Fall, which would make men thousands of years later to be the heirs of the sin of Adam. The finality of the Fall consists in the fact that each day every person renews the Fall afresh, and cannot refrain from doing so. He is caught in the human process of falling, from which he cannot escape, nor can he get back to his origin. Thus the fact that he has been created in the imago Dei as his origin is always present in an accusing law which man knows is true, yet tries to deny in practice. "If man is to be understood as he really is, he must be seen in this actual contradiction, which is the real conflict." [40]

The Bible, according to Brunner, teaches that the "Primal Sin" is a revolt of the creature against the Creator.

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38 Ibid., p. 280.

39 Ibid., pp. 267ff.

40 Heinrich Emil Brunner, Man in Revolt: A Christian Anthropology (London: Lutterworth Press, 1939), pp. 171f.

It is a desire to be equal with God, which results in a defiant, arrogant emancipation or deliberate severance from God. Hence, sin is not merely negation, it is a positive negation. [41]

> And this is the very origin of sin: the assertion of human independence over against God, the declaration of the rights of man's freedom as independent of God's will, the constitution of the autonomous reason, morality, and culture, that 'misunderstanding of reason in itself' . . . where reason refuses any longer to apprehend, but wants to give and to have, where it no longer reflects upon existing truth, but desires 'to think things out for itself,' to initiate, to create, to produce its own thoughts in its own way, a human self-initiated creation made by 'man in his own strength.' [42]

It is due to the very fact that man is made in the "image of God" that he sins. In fact, only he who has the "spirit-power, a power not of this world, which issues from the primal image of God," is able to sin at all, and even in the very act of committing sin he shows his greatness and superiority, for no animal is ever able to rebel against its destiny. [43]

Niebuhr develops his view of the origin and fact of man's sinfulness upon much the same basis. Out of man's self-transcendence or "image of God" comes his ability to rebel. Man is self-determining not only in the sense that he may transcend natural processes and choose alternatives

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41 Ibid., p. 129.

42 Loc. cit. et seq.

43 Ibid., pp. 132f.

presented to him by nature, but he also transcends himself in such a manner that he must choose his total end. Implicit in man's twofold capacity of freedom and self-transcendence, however, is his inability to construct a world of meaning, since he does not have the key to the meaning of the transcendental world. Thus the fact of self-transcendence leads inevitably to a search for some ultimate category of meaning. [44] At this point God encounters man. Until man is confronted by God, he is unaware of his freedom and the evil within him; however, in the light of God, man is made to realize his creatureliness and dependence upon Him. It is at this point that sin manifests itself.

> The real evil in the human situation . . . lies in man's unwillingness to recognize and acknowledge the weakness, finiteness, and dependence of his position in his inclination to grasp after a power and security which transcends the possibilities of human existence, and in his effort to pretend a virtue and knowledge which are beyond the limits of mere creatures . . . . the sin of man consists in the vanity and pride by which he imagines himself to be divine. [45]

Man's essence may be free-determinism, but it is precisely at this point that he contradicts himself, for his sin lies in the wrong use of this freedom. [46] The distinctively Christian doctrine of sin is not based upon man's

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44 Niebuhr, op. cit., pp. 163ff.

45 Ibid., p. 137.

46 Ibid., p. 16.

creatureliness or temporality per se, but in man's vanity and wilful refusal to acknowledge that his existence is finite and determinate in character. [47]

On the other hand, in typical paradoxical fashion so characteristic of Dialectical Theology, Niebuhr does indicate that man's creatureliness pre-determines him to sinfulness. Three aspects of human existence are inextricably interrelated: (1) The "image of God" or man's power of self-transcendence in his spiritual stature. (2) Man's dependence and creatureliness, and (3) man's inevitable rebellion in that he is unwilling to acknowledge this dependence. "Man is insecure and involved in natural contingency; he seeks to overcome his insecurity by a will-to-power which overreaches the limits of human creatureliness." [48] As a self-transcending creature he assumes that he can transcend finite limitations until his mind is identified with the universal mind, and, consequently, all of his intellectual pursuits become infected with pride. [49] In his attempt to construct a world of meaning on this basis, he utilizes some subordinate principle of coherence and becomes involved in idolatry. Yet, in truth, this creature is unable to choose beyond the bounds of the creation in which he lives.

47 Ibid., p. 177.

48 Ibid., p. 178.

49 Ibid., p. 179.

Thus man is exceedingly helpless and is caught in a vicious circle from which he cannot extricate himself.

The human predicament is best understood in the terms of the doctrine of original sin. Niebuhr says that original sin, out of which flows actual sin, is preconditioned by anxiety. Temptation to sin lies in the human situation itself. Man transcends not only the natural and temporal processes, but himself as well. The basis of his creativity, therefore, is his freedom but it is also his temptation. Since he is involved in the natural processes on the one hand, yet can transcend them and foresee their caprices and perils on the other, he becomes anxious. In this anxiety, he attempts to transform his dependence into independence. Hence, anxiety leads to sin because the self lacks the faith and trust to subject itself to the will of God. [50] Unbelief or mistrust is the ultimate basis for sin, and an inordinate self-love arises from this prior sin of lack of trust in God. The picture is not complete, however, without viewing sin as ὕβρις. Man's "evil arises from his effort to transgress the bounds set for his life, an effort which places him in rebellion against God." [51]

Original sin is inevitable, therefore, since the fact

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50 Ibid., pp. 250ff.

51 Ibid., p. 180, italics my own.

of anxiety and the consequent self-centeredness are inevitable; yet man is paradoxically responsible for sin. The fact of responsibility is attested by the fact that feelings of remorse or repentence follow sinful actions. An uneasy conscience serves only to enmesh the self further in sin, because the self strives in desperation to ward off the remorse by rationalistic methods of self-defense. This inevitability of sin is a free gift of fate, and it is only by recourse to Kierkegaard's philosophy of the irrational that it can be made to conform to the view of man's responsibility for it--a task no rational approach could ever accomplish. Hence Niebuhr warns that "loyalty to all the facts may require a provisional defiance of logic, lest complexity in the facts of experience be denied for the sake of a premature logical consistency." [52]

What, then, is the conclusion concerning human freedom? The humanists claim that freedom is the quintessence of man's being, and rightly so, says Brunner, but the liberal makes the mistake of stating only a half-truth, for "unfreedom" is the quintessence of sin. Wherever sin is central in theology, the lack of human freedom must necessarily become central in the theme of Christian anthropology. The Christian view of freedom is that man was created in "freedom-in-responsibility,"

52 Ibid., pp. 255-263.

"freedom-in-and-for-love." The original being of man is not substantial, that is, it is not meant to stand alone; it was derived from God and directed to God. It was never meant to be independent; on the contrary, its highest achievement was designed to be dependence. [53]

> Because the being of man is actually based upon man's dependence upon God, upon the Call of God which chooses him and gives him responsibility, his freedom is only complete where he remains in this dependence, hence--to express this for once in quantitative terms--the maximum of his dependence on God is at the same time the maximum of his freedom, and his freedom decreases with his degree of distance from the place of his origin, from God. [54]

The "un-freedom" into which mankind falls through sin is "un-freedom" in freedom. It cannot be denied that man has a free will. Unless he did he would not have the essence of his human existence. From the standpoint of the Christian faith, therefore, the "un-freedom" does not consist of a shackled will. The "un-freedom" here referred to is based upon the fact that man as a sinner cannot do the good which is also dependent upon God. As a sinner he is alienated and detached from his Creator, the source of Good. Thus, the ability to do good is no longer a gift, but an obligation. The sinner realizes that he ought to do good; he realizes that he ought to love God; he realizes that he is missing an

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53 Brunner, Man in Revolt, pp. 256, 261f.

54 Ibid., p. 263.

essential part of life by not doing so, but he is helpless and finds it impossible to do either. He is forever seared with a burning conscience but cannot do anything about it. This is the vicious circle into which human life has been drawn by sin. [55]

> It is the unfreedom of the non-posse non-peccare, the impossibility of not being a sinner. This impossibility is absolute, not relative. This freedom has been unconditionally, wholly lost. But this freedom is the real freedom, for it is that which decides the eternal meaning or non-meaning, the divine destiny of man. 56

Man may be said to possess a freedom, even as a sinner, but it does not suffice to save him from the final disaster or Judgment and Eternal Death. Thus it might be truthfully said that man has lost his real freedom, and he possesses only the freedom of sin, the freedom for eternal death. [57] Niebuhr maintains that the ultimate proof of freedom is the human spirit's recognition that its will is after all not free to choose between good and evil. "Man is most free in the discovery that he is not free"--in the recognition that freedom has been falsely used in action. [58]

What is the state of man as a sinner? Brunner indicates that the broken fellowship or relationship between God and man results in guilt. Man was able to destroy his communion with

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55 Ibid., pp. 269ff.

56 Ibid., p. 271.

57 Loc. cit., Cf. Augustine and Calvin.

58 Niebuhr, op. cit., pp. 258, 260.

God, but he has never been able to restore it. The pathway to God has been blocked by the avalanche of sin, and the problem--the central problem of the Christian faith--is to find a way in which this guilt might be removed.

Not only is man's relationship to God severed, his nature, as it actually is, has also been perverted. The original primal freedom has been destroyed by sin, for it was based upon the relation to God. [59] "By sin the nature of man, not merely something in his nature, is changed and perverted." [60] Sin does not alter the meaning of his existence, but it alters human nature existentially.

Man's present state as a sinner is one of conflict within his own nature. This strife does not lie in the fact that man is composed of a body and a soul, nor in the fact that man is of this world and yet is capable of transcending it; rather, the real problem is in the disunity of all of these elements. Instead of complementing and aiding one another as originally intended, they are in conflict. "Because man has been created in the image of God, and yet has himself defaced this image, his existence differs from all other forms of existence, as existence in conflict." [61] The dominant word which Brunner applies to human nature in its present form is

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59 Brunner, Man in Revolt, pp. 134f.

60 Ibid., p. 137.

61 Ibid., p. 168.

Widerspruch. In this same connection, Brunner shows that man was originally created to be a unity but that sin has brought a decay of personal unity. Even the psychological factor of the will, when broken away from the will of God, becomes arbitrary, self-willed, blind to truth, harshly assertive, and cruelly disruptive of all feeling. The same is true of feeling. Pleasure was originally connected with joy in God, but through sin it became transferred to the world of sense and has too often become misery. Man is still a unity in the sense of self-consciousness and of self-transcendence as well as of self-determination, but this is only a formal personality with no organizing center; in fact, the content is contradictory. "The individual functions have formed different centres, and they develop like the different centres of government which exist at the same time in a civil war, each one at the cost of the others." [62]

What is the solution to this contradiction? Man is utterly helpless when it comes to remedying the situation, for the best that he can accomplish would still result in a vicious circle of self-glorification. Therefore, it is truly good news when the gospel proclaims that God takes the sinfulness of man upon Himself and into Himself, thus overcoming in his own heart that which cannot be overcome by man. Without this divine

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62 Ibid., pp. 232ff.

initiative and sacrifice as revealed in Christ, man would forever remain unreconciled. Divine grace has a double connotation in the New Testament: Grace represents on the one hand the mercy and forgiveness of God whereby he does that which man himself finds impossible to do--overcomes the sinful elements in all of man's achievements. On the other hand, it represents God's power in man--a resource which man does not have in himself, but which is essential to his becoming what he truly ought to be. [63]

As much as ethical endeavor is necessary and has value, it does not remove the contradiction in the human predicament. The situation calls for an insight into the ultimate hopelessness and helplessness of all human activity. This true apprehension of man's need and desire for deliverance is called repentance in the New Testament. Repentance may thus be defined as the despair of self and of self-help in removing the guilt which men have brought upon themselves; it is a radical turning away from self-reliance to trust in God. "Yes, to repent means to recognize self-trust to be the heart of sin." [64] Repentance is the first effect of divine grace for not only must the actual antagonism itself be overcome by Christ, but through him alone comes the necessary knowledge of the contra-

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63 Niebuhr, op. cit., II, 98f.

64 Heinrich Emil Brunner, The Theology of Crisis (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1931), pp. 56f.

diction of sin to make repentance real and possible.[65]

Human nature can be changed by a conversion experience which for Niebuhr is the "shattering" of the preoccupation of the self with itself. This takes place whenever the self is "encountered" by the power and holiness of God, and is made conscious of the real source and center of life. Christ provides the mediation through which the self is confronted by God. Thus the new life of Christian experience is in reality a new selfhood, the real self, because the bondage of self-centeredness has been broken.[66]

Niebuhr refuses to accept the doctrine of divine determinism. He says,

> . . . only God in Christ can break and reconstruct the sinful self, but . . . the self must "open the door" and is capable of doing so . . . . Yet either affirmation becomes false if it is made without reference to the other. 67

Of course, each must be kept on its own level. The self may be viewed as responsible for acknowledging its undue self-love; nevertheless, from the perspective of the "shattering" or conversion experience, everything is a miracle of grace. Brunner points out in this same connection that the fellowship which God seeks with man is two-sided; the "yes" of man is just as necessary as the "yes" of God. "To this end He gave

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65 Loc. cit.

66 Niebuhr, op. cit., II, 108f.

67 Ibid., p. 118.

His Son, that this could happen, that by means of His self-giving, man would be led to self-surrender." [68] God's grace is the giving of himself to mankind through his son. The corresponding repentance on man's part must mean not only a changed disposition, but man's complete self-surrender. In Biblical terms, the old man must die; man must go to this death with his whole self. [69]

The Reformation emphasis upon "justification by faith" is strong in the Dialectical Theology. Faith, for Brunner, is not merely believing something. It is a real happening which grips a person, a real coming into fellowship with the Redeemer, a genuine participation in the resurrection with Christ to a new life. "Faith means to be born again to a new life, to walk in the Spirit, to become implanted in Christ, to become a member of His body." [70] Faith and the new birth are synonymous terms. Through faith man is restored to his original position for which he was destined at Creation, and thus he finds genuine human life when life is again integrated around God as its center. [71]

> To have part in the divine life of Jesus Christ by faith, to stand in the midst of history and be comprehended in eternal salvation through the reconciliation made in

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68 Brunner, The Divine-Human Encounter, pp. 148f.

69 Ibid., p. 150.

70 Ibid., p. 152.

71 Brunner, Man in Revolt, p. 488.

> him who is called the Life and the Way to Life--this is to be a Christian--to have life eternal. 72

For Brunner, who holds that the formal element of the imago Dei remained intact even though the material content was wholly destroyed, regeneration is a restoration, not a creation de novo. What no longer exists can no longer be repaired, but a thing can be repaired to the extent that one has to say, this is new. Therefore, there is a very real sense in which the new birth may be said to be a reparatio. To this Barth would again reply, Nein! [73]

What has been said thus far in this chapter has largely been concerned with the individual status of man. The Dialectical theologians also stress "collective sinning." Note the following paragraph from Niebuhr in this regard:

> . . . some distinctions must be made between the collective behaviour of men and their individual attitudes. . . . group pride, though having its source in individual attitudes, actually achieves a certain authority over the individual and results in unconditioned demands by the group upon the individual. Whenever the group develops organs of will, as in the apparatus of the state, it seems to the individual to have become an independent centre of moral life. He will be inclined to bow to its pretensions and to acquiesce in its claims of authority, even when these do not coincide with his moral scruples or inclinations. 74

The capacity for new evil will never be avoided by grace; for as long as the self remains within the twofold condition of

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72 Brunner, The Theology of Crisis, p. 67.

73 Brunner, Nature and Grace, p. 34.

74 Niebuhr, op. cit., I, 208.

involvement in natural processes, including "collective sinning," and of transcendence over them, it will be subject to sin. Niebuhr holds an aversion, therefore, to any doctrine of perfection. He maintains that Christ in us is a hope, not a possession; that perfection can never pass beyond the stage of intention into reality in this life; that man has peace because he is relieved of the tensions when forgiveness comes through faith, but he can never know the pure peace of achievement. [75] Brunner, too, feels that there can be no full sense of achievement in this life. Although the actuality of faith is a new man, yet the "eggshells of the old nature still cling to him as something which has been overcome, but still also as something which has to be overcome again and again." [76] This "Christ-decision" by faith is a process which still goes on, and is not yet completed. The Christian life is a continual, "I have said yes," against the struggling of the old nature, which lasts as long as temporal life lasts. [77] Thus Brunner closes his great Christian anthropology, Man in Revolt, with a note of pathos which expresses a longing for final liberation:

> We are still living 'in the flesh,' in a way of existence which is determined by separation from God, which in faith, in principle, but not in its actual consequences, has been overcome. Death still clings to us;

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75 Ibid., II, 125.

76 Brunner, Man in Revolt, loc. cit.

77 Loc. cit.

> it still waits for us; we still have to pass through it. The absolute living life can only be where death, and all that is connected with death, has been purged away. . . . 'And death shall be no more; neither shall there by mourning, not crying, not pain, any more; the first things are passed away.' 78

Thus concludes the examination of the modern movement of reaction against religious liberalism. In the main it has sought to transform the Augustinian-Calvinistic tradition by the transfusion of a more dynamic manner of viewing theology, and by a synthesis of the traditional views and recent Biblical investigation. Future generations will more accurately evaluate this position, but it may be said now that Dialectical Theology has reinstated the concept of man's sinfulness, and made its use respectable in modern theology.

Modern religious liberalism and Dialectical theology represent comparatively recent approaches in Christian theology as far as method is concerned, whereas the following chapter, entitled "Protestant Orthodoxy," will deal largely with traditional Christian orthodoxy in a modern setting.

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78 Ibid., p. 495.

CHAPTER IV. PROTESTANT ORTHODOXY

Webster's Dictionary defines orthodox as meaning in general "sound in opinion or doctrine," or specifically, as "holding the Christian faith as formulated in the great church creeds and confessions." [1] This chapter might be hurriedly concluded, therefore, by referring the reader to a previous section of this paper entitled, "Historical Backgrounds." Protestant orthodoxy accepts all of the basic teachings of the early church, and follows at many points the historic Catholic positions, except for the authoritarianism of the church and the efficacy of the sacraments. It replaces these latter positions by a trust in the authority of the Bible, interpreted directly by the individual mind and conscience. [2]

The significance of the Bible cannot be underscored too heavily in properly interpreting any position held by contemporary orthodoxy. Leander S. Keyser prefaces his Philosophy of Christianity by saying that the Bible is the source book of Christianity for this and any age. It is, therefore, to be accepted at face value as authoritative and trustworthy on all the subjects of which its writers treat. It is

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1 Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (Fifth edition, Springfield, Massachusetts: G. & C. Merriam co., publishers, 1941).

2 Edwin A. Burtt, Types of Religious Philosophy (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1939), p. 149.

true, he adds, that the Bible does not impart full knowledge on every conceivable subject, but when the Bible does speak it is authoritative and tells the truth regardless of whether it be concerned with natural pehnomena, history, providence, morality, salvation, or temporal and eternal values. [3] The authority and infallibility of the Scriptures are based upon its inspiration by God. Since this inspiration is from God the Book is considered divine. This does not mean that the human and divine elements do not vary and interplay, but it does mean that the whole of it is a revelation from God which progressively unfolds truth through the processes of history, according to the purpose of redemption in Christ. [4] Hence, whenever the moral guide and intellectual standard of the Bible do not coincide with modern scientific hypotheses, the latter was held to be untrue. One observer has said that "the literalism of the fundamentalist interpretation of the Bible--the conviction that it is infallibly true in all its statements when taken in their most obvious meaning--placed the reformed sects under a . . . serious handicap, in face of the challenge of rapid scientific progress. . ." [5] The final court of appeal, then, for anthropology, or any other doctrine, is the Bible.

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3 Leander S. Keyser, The Philosophy of Christianity (Burlington, Iowa: The Lutheran Literary Board, 1928), p. 18.

4 John Alfred Faulkner, Modernism and the Christian Faith (New York: The Methodist Book Concern, 1921), pp. 20f.

5 Burtt, op. cit., p. 160.

In general there are two great divisions in contemporary orthodoxy, arising from two of the three main currents of historical Christianity. One of these groups is Fundamentalism which is rooted historically in the Augustinian-Calvinistic tradition. The other is best termed Wesleyan Arminianism which developed largely from the Semi-Pelagian and Arminian positions. These two divisions are in essential agreement in large areas, however, and this chapter will attempt to present in the main the orthodox position as a whole, indicating divergent opinions only when necessary.

The orthodox view of the origin of man is well stated in the Westminster Shorter Catechism: "God created man, male and female, after His own image, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, with dominion over the creatures." [6] It takes very little discernment to see that this view raises some serious doubts concerning the harmony of the Biblical view of man and the theories of evolution. Machen is adamant in insisting that man was the direct creation of God, and not even the product of God's works of providence. Man was not due to God's governing the course of natural processes, but was due to a fully supernatural act of God. "God did not merely order the course of nature in such fashion that man should be

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6 The Shorter Catechism of the Westminster Assembly (standard edition, Philadelphia: Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church of the U. S. A., 1936), p. 3.

produced, but He created man." [7] This view could probably be said to represent the position of nearly all of contemporary orthodoxy, especially Fundamentalism. It should not be overlooked, however, that a scholar who is generally considered to be thoroughly conservative, James Orr, was not adverse to admitting the plausability of some type of "emergent" evolution. He, too, rejects the view that evolution resulted from fortuitous variations, combined with natural selection; but he is rather sympathetic with the idea that evolution may have resulted through a providentially inspired development from within. He concludes that sometime during the dim ages of the past the present fixity of order was broken down and plasticity was the order of the day. Out of the great inrush of new forms during this period came many new species. He finds that the teaching of evolution and the Bible agree upon the fact that man is the crown and masterpiece of the whole of Creation. Hence he does not spend too much time arguing the points of detail. [8] Let it be said, however, that the only type of evolutionary theory to which Orr says he might be able to subscribe must take into account a creative, organizing intelli-

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7 J. Gresham Machen, The Christian View of Man (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1947), p. 132.

8 James Orr, The Christian View of God and the World (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1947), pp. 99, 101, 133.

gence which works in and through the process. "It must make room within its process for the introduction of new potencies, new factors, which can only be referred directly to the great Creative Cause." [9]

Bishop Randolph S. Foster concedes that the evolution of higher organisms from lower types might be conceivable, although there is not a bit of positive proof that such has ever happened. But if such a theory were actually substantiated and clearly established, it still would not account for man. His body would be all that would come under the laws of evolution. Thus he feels compelled to believe that man was a creation of a new order and kind of existence from the very start. [10] Although Lecomte du Nouy builds upon the very concession that Bishop Foster makes, it is probable that the Bishop would still find the whole theory of evolution unacceptable.

In summary, therefore, it may be said that according to orthodoxy, man was originally created on the highest possible plane from which he has subsequently degenerated. Rather than starting at the bottom and rising, man was the summit of creation with a moral personality like God Himself--in the "image of God,"--possessing the highest possible degree of human knowledge, righteousness, and freedom.

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9 James Orr, Sidelights on Christian Doctrine (New York: A. C. Armstrong and Son, 1909), p. 87.

10 Randolph S. Foster, Creation: God in Time and Space (New York: Hunt and Eaton, 1895), pp. 215f.

The conservative Christian view of man starts with the premise that the distinctive part of man's being is his spiritual nature. It is at this point that Protestant Orthodoxy finds itself to be most incompatible with the positivistic temper of the contemporary age. It is this fact that makes man different in kind from all the rest of creation, for there is a spirit in man which lifts him above himself and his world. [11] But man is more than pure spirit; he is an incorporated spirit. He is enshrined in an organism which is similar in material composition to all other organisms. [12] Orr points out that both the body and the soul are inseparable elements in man's personality which God never intended to be separated. Thus death is unnatural to man and is a part of the penality for sin. [13] Foster, on the other hand, does not feel that the body is an essential part of human personality. To him the spiritual nature alone is the permanent element; the organism is not a part of man's essence, but is simply the "temporary home in which he begins his existence and by means of which he is initiated into his proper selfhood." [14] The body is merely the organism which is a direct provision

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11 Orr, Sidelights on Christian Doctrine, p. 82.

12 Foster, op. cit., p. 219.

13 Orr, Sidelights on Christian Doctrine, p. 83.

14 Foster, loc. cit.

for man's use and service during the limited period of his physical existence only. The body, therefore, is denied the preeminence of being man. But even though the body itself is not man, it is man's body. "Precisely what do we mean by this? We mean that it is his body, not that it is himself; that so long as it lasts it is his for residence and use, and exclusively his." [15] Such a view is hardly compatible with the Biblical emphasis upon the unity of personality, however, and it is safe to say that contemporary orthodoxy is more in agreement with Orr's position that both the soul and the body are essential and inseparable elements of the total personality. This latter view is more in keeping with the New Testament view of the Resurrection, which includes in the Gospel the redemption not only of the soul, but a redemption of the whole man--body and soul. [16]

If man was originally created righteous and in the image of his Maker, it is plain to be seen that he is not in that condition now. Some changes for the worse are quite apparent. A "fall" has occurred somewhere in human history, for the image is broken and defiled. The Christian view maintains that man misused his high privilege and plunged into wilful sin. [17] Orthodoxy makes no apology for accepting the Biblical

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15 Ibid., p. 226.

16 Orr, Sidelights on Christian Doctrine, p. 84.

17 Robert Lowry Calhoun, What is Man? (New York: Association Press, 1940), p. 67.

story of the Fall as historical. It is true that a modern theologian in the Wesleyan tradition, H. Orton Wiley, admits that some of the more orthodox theologians of the last century have so literalized this story in every detail that they have failed to do justice to its rich symbolsim; yet he insists that Genesis is historical throughout. Thus he feels that the historical account must be spiritually interpreted in order to realize its full meaning for mankind. [18] Leander Keyser, on the other hand, while being tolerant with those who differ with him, believes that the Biblical account is veritable history as it stands. [19] He bases this conclusion upon the fact that Adam and Eve were real persons in a real garden. To symbolize, therefore, even so much as the forbidden tree or the serpent, would violate the integrity of the history and would be a freak in literature, since there is no change in the style of the narrative. [20] Orr acknowledges the fact that modern Biblical criticism takes issue with the Fundamentalist concerning the validity of the third chapter of Genesis as the final proof of the Fall. The fact of sin and guilt remain, however, even after the Genesis account of the Fall is discarded, and the need of redemption is just as great regardless of

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18 H. Orton Wiley, Christian Theology (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1941), II, 52ff.

19 Leander S. Keyser, Man's First Disobedience (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1924), p. 11.

20 Ibid., p. 49.

sin's origin. The Christian doctrine of redemption, therefore does not rest upon the Genesis account of Adam, but upon the reality of sin and disorder in the world. Orr concludes, consequently, "it would be truer to say that I believe in the third chapter of Genesis, or in the essential truth which it contains, because I believe in sin and Redemption, than to say that I believe in sin and Redemption because of the story of the Fall." [21] Even if that Biblical story were not given, it would be necessary to postulate a similar story in order to explain the sinful condition of man and his world. Thus, it is fortunate that the Biblical narrative is given, for without it the origin and nature of man's sin would have ever been an unsolved riddle. [22]

Olin A. Curtis maintains that "the first sin was a personal act of disobedience. It was a taking of self in place of God . . . . Personal sin is the supreme egotism of a moral person . . . . It is selfishness." [23] The root of sin, J. Gresham Machen points out, was not the gratification of desire; rather it was disobedience to the command of God. God said, "Ye shall not eat of the fruit of the tree;" but man ate the fruit and sinned. [24] Similarly, Wiley says that the historical

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21 Orr, Christian View of God and the World, p. 182.

22 Orr, Sidelights on Christian Doctrine, p. 93.

23 Olin Alfred Curtis, The Christian Faith (New York: Eaton and Mains, 1906), p. 198.

24 Machen, op. cit., p. 218.

origin of sin in the human race was not due to any state for which God might be responsible in the original creation, but it was due to a sinful act on the part of the creature, which in turn became an inherent evil or state in human nature.[25]

The doctrine of original sin is a cardinal emphasis in orthodoxy. This doctrine of original sin or inherited depravity rests solidly upon the Scriptures and the universal testimony of human experience. Experience proves that universal sin is a fact; the Scriptures trace both the fact and the cause. St. Paul is unequivocal, no matter how repulsive his logic may be to modern thought, in the assertion that the malady is hereditary and that the origin rests upon the representative responsibility involved in the Adamic relationship.[26] Orthodoxy has never questioned the premise that the Fall had serious racial consequences, but explanations of the transmission of this inborn depravity have presented problems to theologians for centuries. Orr thinks that the only answer is to be found in the organic unity of the race. This view is expressed as the evolution of the race from a single head in successive generations. The whole race was potentially contained in this single head; therefore, by his sin the whole of his posterity became involved in sin.[27] Within orthodoxy there are three main

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25 Wiley, op. cit., p. 66.

26 Francis Landey Patton, Fundamental Christianity (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1926), p. 276.

27 Orr, Sidelights on Christian Doctrine, p. 100.

theories concerning the mode of transmission; (1) The Realistic Mode, which regards Adam as the natural head of the race; therefore, his posterity must also be identified with him in the original transgression. (2) Federalheadship or the Representative Mode regards Adam as the legal head of the race; therefore, his sin is imputed to all of his posterity. In this view the major emphasis is more upon the original sin than upon the inherited depravity. (3) The Genetic Mode, the view that is held by most Arminians, is also based upon the natural headship of Adam, but regards the consequences of the original sin chiefly in the light of inherited depravity. [28] The Calvinistic fundamentalists regard all of these theories in the light of imputation rather than mere transmission, for "God in His absolute prescience knew that any and every soul of the race, if placed in the state of Adam, would sin just as he did; therefore, he might justly and did actually impute the sin of Adam to every soul." [29]

Regardless of the mode of transmission or the theory of imputation, the scriptural account, as well as universal experience, clearly indicate that each man is existentially depraved. "While then sin has many aspects, man is a sinner, . . . primarily and essentially, not because of what he does but because

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28 Wiley, op. cit., p. 109.

29 John Miley, Systematic Theology (Cincinnati: Jennings and Graham, 1892), I, 470.

of what he is." [30] Consequently, as Edwin Lewis puts it, each person commits a "first sin" hypothetically, but this first sin on the part of the individual does not make his nature henceforth sinful; rather it reveals a nature sinful already. Since God is utterly and essentially holy, sinful man must be at enmity with Him. This enmity does not consist in wrong choices or deeds; it consists in the sinful status which choices and deeds merely manifest. [31]

Curtis feels that depravity consists in the fact that man's basal individual life is inorganic. At present natural man has only the demand of conscience to guide in organising his individual life. Man has lived under this dominion of conscience alone since the Fall; but he was not made to live thus. He was created to live in constant personal intimacy with his Creator and to have his moral life saturated with the fellowship of God. But now man is an outcast and attempts to organize his life under the wholly inadequate demands of conscience. The inability to organize properly the moral life with God's fellowship missing is depravity--an inorganic personality. It is irresponsible lawlessness in "individuality," which inevitably eventuates in responsible lawlessness in self-

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30 Sir Robert Anderson, "Sin and Judgment to Come," The Fundamentals (Chicago: Testimony Publishing Company, n.d.), VI, 40.

31 Edwin Lewis, A Christian Manifesto (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1934), pp. 137f.

decision--personal sin. [32] Lewis follows up with a further enlightening statement. Human nature is necessarily the presupposition of all human history, but the fundamental fact about human nature is that it lacks the capacity of complete self-organization or integration. [33] Man sins, therefore, because he is a sinner, or in other words, man is able to conceive on a higher plane than he can execute. The cause of this lies in the "radical defect" which is essential to his nature prior to all action. [34]

Not by virtue of any deliberate choice but of necessity as a member of a sinful race, man is born a sinner. Thus the holy God and sinful men stand over against each other as opposites. But God, who chose to create man and found it necessary to condemn him, is still able to provide a deliverance for him from that condemnation. This deliverance must, therefore, be of grace. "The Christian doctrine of atonement is the statement that the God who creates and the God who condemns is also the God who 'throws open the gates of a new life.'" [35] It was in Jesus Christ that God by his grace made atonement for the sins of all mankind.

In orthodox tenets, salvation cannot be based upon any

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32 Curtis, op. cit., pp. 201, 206f.

33 Lewis, op. cit., p. 138.

34 Loc. cit.

35 Ibid., p. 149.

ether foundation than the redeeming work of Christ. It is based upon the vicarious atonement of Jesus as Savior, not by his teaching nor by his Person, but by his act upon the cross. It was not his moral influence but his substitution for the sins of mankind that makes him Savior. [36] Arminians usually interpret the atonement in a slightly different manner by saying that Christ satisfied the moral demands of the justice of God rather than being an actual substitute for sin, but the practical implication remains the same. Man is unable to rise above his sinfulness aside from supernatural aid.

What about the modifiability of human nature? For both Calvinists and Arminians the initial step is that of conversion or the new birth. This is viewed as a definite crisis experience which involves repentance, an act of the will, and faith. This new birth or regeneration is the work of the Holy Spirit who imparts a new and holy life to the soul of sinful man. Through this experience men are united to Christ and become in a very real sense children of God. [37]

Concerning freedom Machen uses rather strong language in asserting that the Bible clearly teaches a double predestination:

> . . . it tells us in the clearest possible way, not only in general that God has foreordained all things according to the counsel of His will but also in particular

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36 J. Gresham Machen, Christianity and Liberalism (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1923), p. 117.

37 Orr, Sidelights of Christian Doctrine, p. 144.

> that He has foreordained the salvation of some men and the loss of others. 38

Such a view may represent the academic view of Protestant Fundamentalism, but, practically speaking, orthodoxy in general usually allows some freedom in the depraved will which renders it able to choose righteousness with the aid of cooperating grace.

The orthodox position has no quarrel with the modern psychologists who claim that to be converted is to become integrated. It is not in the least heterodox to believe that the redeemed person has become integrated, but the difference of opinion concerns the level at which it occurs and with respect to the method by which integration is effected. To the orthodox person the new birth or regeneration is never considered as a natural phenomenon. Leslie R. Marston aptly points out that nothing is fully satisfying to the human soul apart from God. Reconciliation or the restoration of righteousness and the God-image alone is able to gather up the loose strands of a man's being, to direct them to their proper and intended end, to co-ordinate and integrate or "bring into focus" the conflicting elements of life. 39

How is this integration effected? Through faith in the grace of God. "Through faith in Christ man is brought to the

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38 Machen, Christianity and Liberalism, p. 62.

39 Leslie R. Marston, From Chaos to Character (Winona Lake, Indiana: Light and Life Press, 1944), pp. 133f.

original of theism's portrait, to knowledge of and communion with theism's God." [40] Saving faith is not bare intellectualism; not is it merely mystical feeling; nor again is it practice or works. It is a response of the entire Self--intellect, feeling, and action--to the truth.

> And this faith is not of ourselves; it is the gift of God. Not only does man seek God, but God is searching for man and when His Spirit comes to grips with him, then man knows by faith, not by intellect alone, nor temperament alone, nor will alone, nor by intellect, temperament, and will together--but by the response of man's inmost, utmost Self to the call of God. 41

A cleavage between Fundamentalism and some Wesleyan Arminians is occasioned by the doctrine of entire sanctification. Nearly all orthodox traditions believe in the necessity of this experience, but there is a lack of agreement regarding the time that such an experience may take place.

As far as the Calvinistic Fundamentalists are concerned, this experience of Christian perfection is unobtainable in this life since sinless living is impossible according to their definition of sin which includes all ignorance and weakness. Thus freedom from depravity can only be obtained at or after death. The Wesleyan Arminians of the "holiness movement," however, hold to the present possibility of entire sanctification as a cardinal doctrine. This view also is predicated upon the

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40 Ibid., p. 136.

41 Loc. cit. et seq.

definition of sin, "a wilful transgression of a known law of God," which is largely accepted as Wesleyan even though it does not exhaust Wesley's view of sin. It has been suggested that if each could grasp the intent and content of the other's definition of sin, a common understanding would result. [42] It should be noted, however, that the Fundamentalists have a "higher life" movement. This "Keswick movement" emphasizes the Spirit-filled life. The emphasis is upon the baptism of the Spirit which both empowers for service and suppresses the inherently and inescapably sinfulness of human nature. [43] The Wesleyan "holiness movement," on the other hand, insists that by a second definite work of grace, the depraved nature may be more than suppressed; it may be removed or "eradicated", and the volitional nature may be cleansed and brought into harmony with the will of God prior to death. [44]

A second area in which the two groups find compromise or agreement nearly impossible has to do with the historical emphasis of the Augustinian-Calvinistic theology upon the perseverance of the saints. Modern Fundamentalists still adhere to this doctrine, which currently is popularly known as "eternal security," whereas Wesleyan Arminians soberly regard apostasy

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42 Wilder R. Reynolds, The Human Problem (Berne, Indiana: Economy Printing Concern, Inc., n.d.), pp. 15f.

43 Ibid., p. 10.

44 Ibid., pp. 15f.

as a very real possibility after regeneration.

Although these differences cause a rather definite division between the two groups, Protestant orthodoxy as a whole agrees upon the ultimate objective of salvation provided by Christ. The objective is the restoration of the moral perfection lost by the Fall. No one would so much as imply that pre-Fall perfection is possible in this life, but eternal life is the gift of God to everyone who accepts the provisions of the atonement provided by Christ. His final victory over death by the Resurrection is the basis of hope for each Christian that he, too, shall some day realize the full effect of redemption in his whole person--body and soul.

A word concerning Christian education might be added as a postscript to this chapter. The effectiveness of Christian education is becoming more and more significant to orthodoxy. The initial rise of the Religious education movement came from religious liberalism, with its emphasis upon the efficacy of the educative process for producing Christian character. The presupposition of religious education according to religious liberalism is the gradual method of developing the latent possibilities of a child into Christian character. This view is discarded by orthodoxy; rather, Christian education is viewed as a valuable aid in leading to a definite evangelical conversion. Proper nurture is then considered essential to the subsequent growth of the convert. Emme and Stevick call

attention to the fact that many evangelical churches are now beginning to realize the importance of starting religious education at a very early age and bringing the whole process to a focus in a crisis experience when the child feels sufficiently aware of what is involved and wishes to make his personal committment. [45] Christian education in this view would never replace the conversion experience; in fact, it would serve to emphasize it. Orthodoxy can thus gain a valuable ally in bringing about an understanding of what is involved on the part of the child prior to his volitional act of accepting regeneration in a personal sense.

In summary in might be stated that modern Protestant Orthodoxy places its confidence in the Bible as inspired and infallible. Inasmuch as the historical creeds of Christendom have enlarged upon the Biblical view and have not been contradictory to it, the traditional statements of Christian orthodoxy form the basis of present day orthodoxy. Hence the historicity of the Biblical account of man's origin, fall, and redemption are held as inviolate.

A broad comparison of the three distinct movement in contemporary theology might be helpful. Modern religious liberalism either denies or is agnostic concerning supernaturalism, thus admitting only a naturalistic interpretation of

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45 Earle Edward Emme, et. al., An Introduction to the Principles of Religious Education (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1926), p. 18.

Christian theology. Protestant Orthodoxy, on the other hand, while it does not deny the validity of naturalism within its limited domain, seeks the ultimates of reality in the supernaturalistic realm. Dialectical theology is unacceptable in its present dialectical form to either of the above groups. It is avowedly supernaturalistic, but it refuses to accept the Biblicism and conservative emphasis of historical orthodoxy.

PART III

PERSONAL CONCLUSIONS

CHAPTER I. A PERSONAL THEORY

As a preliminary statement it might be explained that the following conclusions are not necessarily final. In the course of future thought and study, the author of this thesis will probably find many additions, subtractions, and revisions to make. Let it then be said that the personal theory developed below is essentially tentative and exploratory in character.

I. THE ORIGIN OF MAN

The first principle of the position resulting from this investigation is the acceptance of the Biblical account of man's origin as the most accurate and satisfactory explanation for Christian anthropology. Such a principle cannot be scientifically defended, for it must be admitted that there is no absolute evidence, empirically speaking, concerning the origin of man. Whatever view is held, it must be accepted by faith--"the evidence of things not seen."

Lecomte du Noüy traces the two pathways which eventually lead to a comprehension of man: (1) the direct road of revelation, which is independent of rational thought, and (2) the strictly rational and scientific method. [1] He indicates that it is only a fortunate few who are able to accept the first

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1 Pierre Lecomte du Noüy, Human Destiny (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1948), p. 3.

method, whereas the second is in widespread vogue. The scientific method, however, requires that the universe be described as it is perceived and conceived by the human mind. In a word, it results in a subjective idea of the universe dependent upon rational interpretation of sensorial data and observations. [2] Dr. du Noüy significantly states that there

> . . . are gaps in the continuity of our mental images of the universe which force us to admit that the beautiful unity we are striving to demonstrate in nature is nothing more, at the present time, than a philosophical, one might almost say sentimental, conviction. Should we ever be able to demonstrate the reality of this unity, it would only prove that our human, intuitive concepts had reached truth directly, before our rational methods had reached truth directly . . . . [3]

Dr. du Noüy then proceeds to admit that, on the basis of man's present knowledge, namely, by using the methods which have proved useful in the interpretation of the inanimate world, it is impossible to account for not only the birth of life but also the appearance of the basic substances required for the building of life--highly dissymetrical molecules. Thus, while science demands respect, it is a mistake to reverence its almightiness. [4] It can therefore be repeated with emphasis that there is no absolute evidence, empirically speaking, concerning the origin of man.

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2 Loc. cit. et seq.

3 Ibid., p. 38.

4 Loc. cit. et seq.

Why is it more difficult to accept the Genesis record of creation than to attempt to trace man's history through the ages until the quest finally stops either through the sheer exhaustion of attempting to reconstruct the past eternities ad infinitum, or by eventually postulating a Creative Principle or God behind the process? It is significant to find the biologist, du Noüy, subscribing to a finalistic point of view. He says, ". . . we shall use, as a leading light, a teleological hypothesis, that is, a finalism with a very ultimate goal, a 'telefinalism,' if we may be allowed to coin a new word." [5] "An explanation of the evolution of life by chance alone is untenable today." [6]

Edwin Lewis makes a theological application from a similar point of view. The Christian view of man contradicts the older naturalistic idea that man is merely the product of the world system. According to Christianity, the world exists for man, and the creative activity of God was inspired by the ultimate aim of securing man and bringing him to completion. Thus, man is more than a mere derivation of impersonal mechanisms. "It is the philosophy which holds that without the mind of man to appreciate and interpret it, the universe remains an

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5 Ibid., p. 52.

6 Ibid., p. 43.

incomplete fragment." [7] Dr. Lewis feels that this view is not out of harmony with the prevailing scientific theory of the process whereby man originated, but, he explains, it interprets the process as instrumental, not as self-explaining. [8]

The serious efforts of du Noüy and Lewis to harmonize the Christian estimate of man with modern scientific hypotheses of evolution are not to be dismissed as frivolous. Dr. du Noüy, in expressing the view of the scientist, admits that there is an inexplicable discontinuity between inorganic matter and organic matter; between matter and man with a conscience and freedom.

> Just as there seems to be an intellectually impassable gap between the reversible "evolution" of electrons and that of atoms (built of electrons); between the irreversible evolution of atoms and that of life (built of atoms); so there seems to be an intellectually impassable gap between the evolution of life and that of man, as such. Man is still an animal by his very structure. . . . Nevertheless he has also brought into the world, from an unknown source, other instincts and ideas specifically human which have become overwhelmingly important although contradicting the first, and it is the development of these ideas, these new characters which constitutes the present phase of evolution. 9

Hence, Dr. du Noüy finds that his newly coined term, telefinalism, which postulates the intervention of Idea, Will, supreme Intelligence, or God, throws a little light on this

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7 Edwin Lewis, The Faith We Declare (Nashville: Cokesbury Press, 1939), p. 34.

8 Ibid., pp. 32f.

9 du Noüy, op. cit., p. 99.

difficulty of the transformations which must occur in the uninterrupted line of man's development. [10]

Since the views of both Lewis and du Noüy are predicated upon some concept of God working in the process, why is it not just as tenable to accept the creation story of Genesis? It certainly should be no more difficult for God to create man instanter than for him to initiate a process in order to obtain and develop man. An acceptance of the Biblical account as historical might bring the accusation of an unrealistic resort to the principle of parsimony, or to the fallacy of causal simplicity; nevertheless, no more credulity is required to accept it than to accept the evolutionary view. It lends greater dignity to man's place in the universe; it better explains man's relationship to God; and it adequately explains how man came to be a rational and immortal being whose life includes moral and spiritual elements.

II. ADAM: THE ESSENCE OF HUMAN NATURE

The second principle of the position resulting from this investigation is that Adam was created "good," which means he was: sinless or holy; integrated or organized; capable of a personal communication and relationship with his Creator; made in the image of God, with full capacity for

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10 Ibid., p. 97.

rational and moral development; self-transcending; self-conscious; and self-determining. Human nature is neither a dualism nor a monism; it is a gestalt.

The acceptance of the historicity of the Genesis account of creation demands a logical adherence to the further implications of that story. After the six creative "days" had passed, it is said that God reviewed his handiwork and saw that it "was very good." [11] No one except a radical determinist considers that God is directly responsible for evil; therefore, the original creation, including man, could not be other than good.

James Orr warns against putting more into the original state of man than the Biblical narrative warrants. Aside from the implications that Adam named the various animals and efficiently executed his dominion over the lower creation, there is no proof in Genesis that he was a being of advanced intellectual attainments, or that he possessed any intuitive knowledge of the arts and sciences. Such a view does not contradict the position, however, that Adam had an uncorrupted capacity for knowledge which has never since been equalled. If it cannot be said that he was a savage, neither can it be said that he was highly civilized.

> It is presumed that man had high and noble faculties, a pure and harmonious nature, rectitude of will, capability

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11 Genesis 1:31.

> of understanding his Creator's instructions, and power to obey them. Beyond that we need not go. 12

The image Dei. A further assertion of the Genesis record is that man was created in the image and likeness of God. This statement at once separates Adam from all of the prior creation, and places him on a distinctive level. Niebuhr is probably correct by assuming that man's self-transcendence and self-consciousness are integral to the image Dei. [13] "Christian anthropology rests on the conviction that man is an animal made in the image of God, which means that he is not an animal at all." [14] In this connection, Brunner points out that man is in contrast to all the rest of creation, not because he was created by and through God, but because he was created in and for God. [15] Hence he can only be understood and can only understand himself in God. It was because he bore the image of God that he was thus lifted above all other earthly creatures, and because he was made in that imago, he was conscious of the fact. Brunner terms this responsible

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12 James Orr, The Christian View of God and the World (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1947), p. 186.

13 Reinhold Niebuhr, The Nature and Destiny of Man (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1946), I, 162.

14 John S. Whale, Christian Doctrine (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947), p. 12.

15 Heinrich Emil Brunner, Man in Revolt: A Christian Anthropology (London: Lutterworth Press, 1939), p. 92.

awareness man's Ansprechbarkeit--addressability or answerability. [16]

> [Man] is the creaturely counterpart of [God's] Self-existence, posited by God Himself; . . . the being created by God to stand 'over-against' Him, who can reply to God, and who in this answer alone fulfills--or destroys--the purpose of God's creation. [17]

Stanley R. Hopper maintains that the doctrine of the image must be regarded in a personalistic manner or its true meaning is lost. The person who views reason alone as the seat of the imago is shortsighted, for "we are created like God by virtue of our being created as persons, endowed with a capacity for good and evil." [18] But even more than this is involved in the image; the climax of the doctrine consists in the fact that man, as a creature, stands in a unique relationship of response and responsibility to God. [19] Such a personal relationship would be impossible unless there were some common point of contact; unless man was created with a "moral personality like God himself" possesses. [20]

What about human freedom? Man's choices cannot possibly be wholly spontaneous, for it is difficult to think of moral responsibility for uncaused choices. On the other hand, it is

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16 Whale, op. cit., p. 44.

17 Brunner, op. cit., p. 98.

18 Stanley Romaine Hopper, The Crisis of Faith (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1944), p. 225.

19 Loc. cit.

20 Olin Alfred Curtis, The Christian Faith (New York: Eaton and Mains, 1905), p. 193.

just as absurd to speak of responsibility under a rigid causality. But it not impossible to think of something as causally determined by factors within itself. Thus, Spinoza pointed out, "freedom of man consists not in his being undetermined, but in his being determined by forces and conditions arising from his own nature and within himself, as contrasted with his being determined by something that coerces him." [21] Hence human freedom is a determinism of a kind--a self-determinism. This is man's distinctive dignity; this makes him responsible for his voluntary acts. Adam, possessing original freedom in an uncorrupted and undisrupted state, possessed the maximum power of self-determination.

But simply to say that man is self-determining does not completely answer the question concerning human freedom. What factors make him self-determining? At one time it was held that man's intelligence or reason wholly governed his purposive activity, and that the "will" was the mental "faculty" largely responsible for man's choices. The act of willing or making voluntary choices, however, is a function of the entire human gestalt. It is true that the volition is largely a complex mental factor; nevertheless, it is related to the entire personality. Even physical states, such as bodily fatigue , hunger, or desire, play an important role in

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21 John Herman Randall, Jr., and Justus Bechler, Philosophy: An Introduction (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1942), p. 236.

volitional activity.

The a priori of human freedom is man's self-transcendence. It is through this self-transcendental quality of his nature that man stands above himself, makes an object of himself, and has the power of relating himself. "This power to relate himself is man's initial freedom." [22] It is inevitable, therefore, that the self should seek to relate itself to some center about which to organize. In his self-transcendence, man discovers that he cannot adequately measure himself by himself, nor can he measure himself by the world around him. If he seeks to establish his center in the world, he finds that his freedom is sapped by causality. If he tries to make himself the center, he converts all values into egoism and finds that his relationships are fatally introverted. There is but one alternative left, relating the self to an other--an Other of eternal significance. [23] The fact of original sin cannot be understood apart from the a priori fact of original freedom. Adam, by virtue of this initial freedom, could either love and obey God, or he could rebel. Hopper significantly indicates that original freedom and original sin are therefore the positive and negative aspects of one and the same principle --man's essential dignity under God. [24] Adam could never have

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22 Hopper, op. cit., p. 301.

23 Ibid., pp. 300f.

24 Ibid., p. 54.

sinned were it not that he bore this distinctively human mark --the image of God.

Is human nature a dualism, a monism, or a gestalt? The gestalt postulate, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, is applicable to the Christian view of human life. The parts in this case are the body and soul, the material and metaphysical aspects of human nature. There is a unity of personality in man, however, which is not explicable merely on the basis of an analysis of these parts. The life of the soul is not one thing, and the life of the body something altogether different. The life of man is not a mere sum, "in which each item is independent of the others and simply counts for one in making up the sum." [25] Both the life of the soul and the life of the body "are one and the same, i.e. the life of man as man." [26] Man is an organized whole, a configuration, a unity, a person.

> Man is not . . . spirit temporarily imprisoned in flesh, soul miserably tethered to a body, but a single unitary, body-spirit person made wholly for God, and therefore finding his wholeness only in God. It is because that fundamental central relationship to God has broken down that the unity of spirit and body has also broken down. 27

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25 Robert S. Woodworth, Contemporary Schools of Psychology (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1931), p. 98.

26 Hopper, op. cit., p. 224.

27 Herbert H. Farmer, God and Men (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1947), p. 90.

Thus Orr is right when he contends that God never intended that there ever should be a separation of the parts.[28] Death is an unnatural intrusion into the complex wholeness of human life as the result of sin. The Christian concept of eternal life can only be postulated upon the fact of Christ's resurrection. The resurrection not only sealed the hope of salvation for the soul, but it also gave promise to the ultimate redemption of man as a gestalt--soul and body combined in one personality. Thus the mere immortality--pure survival--of the soul does not satisfy a true Christian conception of man.

III. ADAM: THE FALL AND ORIGINAL SIN

The third principle of the position arising from this investigation is the acceptance of the Biblical account of Adam, his fall, and original sin, as historical. This postulate does not mean that the Biblical account is necessarily literal in every detail, but it does mean that the account in Genesis is historically factual.

A critical examination of the dominant contemporary view. A great deal has been written in recent years concerning man's "fallen" and sinful state. Especially is this true

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28 James Orr, Sidelights on Christian Doctrine (New York: A. C. Armstrong and Son, 1909), p. 84.

of the Dialectical theologians. [29] The one characteristic of this group of writers which differs from that of historical orthodoxy is the fact that the outstanding present day treatments of the Fall and Original Sin discard the historical element of Adam's Primal Sin, and emphasize solely the present "fall" of each person individually.

Since the universality of sin is undeniable; since mere environmental influence is insufficient to account for this universality; there must be something intrinsic to the human situation which gives rise to the "original sin" of each individual. Paul S. Rees has succinctly summarized Niebuhr's essential position in this regard as follows: It is not a sin to be finite, but to be finite is to be a sinner. [30] As was shown in a previous chapter, Niebuhr feels that the very anxiety of the human situation--man's ability to transcend his immediate situation, whereby he sees its ultimate meaning; yet his inevitable involvement in that situation--necessarily predetermines the "fall" of each person. Creature that he is, man attempts to construct his own world-meaning and sets his selfish will against the will of God; he attempts to transform his dependence into independence; his will lacks the trust

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29 Cf., Brunner, op. cit., pp. 129ff, 145ff, 171f; Hopper, op. cit., pp. 54f; Niebuhr, op. cit., pp. 276-280.

30 Paul S. Rees, "Our Wesleyan Heritage After Two Centuries," The Asbury Seminarian, III, (Spring, 1948), 9.

necessary to subject itself to the will of God. [31] Thus, sin inevitably arises from his creaturehood.

Such a view calls for a reinterpretation of the Biblical narratives. Hence Paul S. Minear calls attention to the mythopoeical character of the Fall accounts as follows:

> Some of the apocalyptic myths stress the fall of Adam and Eve from their paradise; some describe the fall of the angels from their heavenly paradise. . . . the myth gives existential witness to the consciousness that 'before God, man is always in the wrong.' As objective explanations of precisely how sin entered into the world, these tales are patently inadequate. As expressions of the consciousness that sin has entered, that it actually infects all creation, that sin enters only by sin, and that it can be overcome only by God's act--these myths had profound meanings in their original settings. 32

Eden is said, therefore, to fit no geographical location; Adam's fall cannot be marked by any historical calendar. The Fall does not fit any "aboriginal calamity," but is a dimension of present human experience. Each person is his own "Adam," as are all men solidarily "Adam." "Thus Paradise before the Fall is not a period of history, but our 'memory' of a divinely intended quality of life, given to us along with our consciousness of guilt." [33]

It might be questioned, however, whether or not this view of the "pre-fall consciousness," the "fall," and "original sin" does justice to both God and the dignity of man. If

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31 Niebuhr, op. cit., pp. 250ff.

32 Paul Sevier Minear, Eyes of Faith (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1946), p. 245.

33 Whale, op. cit., p. 52.

the hypothetical "first Man" was created for fellowship with God but could not help repudiating it; if he had a "memory" of a divinely intended quality of life, but existentially could be conscious only of a sense of guilt; can the God who originally created him in this pathetically polarized fashion be said to be good, holy, or just? Is it not a contradiction to say that God created man for a certain purpose, but that existentially that creation defeated its intent, not through a miscarriage of the original potentiality, but intrinsically and inevitably? Except on the basis of a limited atonement or of universalism, this view of the human situation is incompatible with the Christian view of God.

It might be argued that the revelation of God through Christ, and the mediation and reconciliation Christ provided is the way of escape for man; that the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" is co-existent with creation. What about those multitudes who never have and never will hear of Christ? Are they to be damned merely because they were intended to be human beings involved in an inevitable situation of rebellion against God? Does not such a view contradict the very concept of human freedom? If some semblance of human freedom is not admitted, the a priori of self-transcendence disappears; and if self-transcendence is denied, man is merely an animal, not a man. Hopper maintains that "the notion of original sin must be understood against a prior fact--the fact

of original freedom which it implies." [34] If original freedom means, as Hopper defines it, an initial freedom of each man to love and obey God or to rebel, the human situation does not necessarily pre-condition or pre-determine man to sin. But if sin is inevitable and universal as experience, historical orthodoxy, and many leading contemporary theologians attest, hence validating the "notion" of original sin; if the facts of the case point to the "inexplicable certainty that all men have fallen short of the glory of God;" [35] it must be admitted that man no longer possesses the full use of original freedom whereby he is free to choose otherwise than to rebel. He is not responsible, therefore, for an individual "fall," involving an existential and personal "original sin." His sinfulness must be contingent upon something prior to his present existence and person; it must be causally determined. This is exactly the position to which an historical treatment of the Fall and Original Sin as found in Genesis leads.

Original Sin--the perversion of a virtue. In treating original sin as a historical act of Adam, Hopper's statement is appropriate--"the notion of original sin must be understood against a prior fact--the fact of original freedom which it implies," the initial freedom to be obedient or disobedient to God; to love him or fear him. Thus, original sin can truly be

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34 Hopper, op. cit., p. 54.

35 Loc. cit.

said to be a negative assertion of the essential dignity of man under God. It may be said, therefore, that evil in the human situation is to a large extent perverted good, not the privation of good. In a word, original sin represents the negative assertion, not a mere lack of realization, of that principle in human nature--freedom--which is intrinsic to man's dignity under God.

Man was created a free moral agent. This is the necessary a priori of his self-transcendence and essential personality. Such a view is necessary to a proper understanding of the imago Dei. Hence, no one can deny that man's freedom was not only absolutely essential, but also a virtue. It was at this point, however, that virtue became a vice, a perverted good. Man used his freedom to digress from the will of God and to sever that personal relationship with God for which he was created. Hence, Curtis, Niebuhr, Brunner, and a host of other theologians maintain that personal sin is basically selfishness and pride--self-will versus God's will. The original sin was the misuse of a virtue; it was self-determination perverted.

The only adequate explanation of the Primal Sin is that Adam and Eve intentionally violated God's law by following self-interest instead of God's mandates. Curtis supports the contention that evil in the human situation is misused or perverted good by pointing out that this first disobedience came

out of four motives: (1) physical desire--the fruit was good to eat, (2) cosmic curiosity--to eat was to become as wise as God, (3) the personal spring toward self-assertion--a disobedience to God's command that the tree be left alone, and (4) social influence as manifested by Eve giving of the forbidden fruit to Adam. Each of these motives is not only good but absolutely essential to man, but all four can become evil if and when they urge a moral person to disobey God. [36]

IV. THE PERSONAL AND RACIAL CONSEQUENCES OF ORIGINAL SIN

Fourth conclusion: The Fall constituted a personal sin for Adam, and as such had severe personal consequences, but in addition, this Primal Sin had racial consequences which have rendered the whole race alien from God.

The true effects of the Fall cannot be fully appreciated aside from some understanding of both man's constitution and that of the world in which he lives in relation to God's will. E. Stanley Jones maintains that not only is the true way of life to be found in the Holy Scriptures, even though these are of primary importance, but the nature of reality supports the Christian way of life. God proposed to redeem the world through Christ, but it should also be remembered that the world was created through Christ. "Through him all existence came into

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36 Curtis, op. cit., p. 197.

being, no existence came into being apart from him." [37] "For it was by him that all things were created both in heaven and on earth, both the seen and the unseen. . . ." [38] Thus the Kingdom of God is not only manifest through special revelation, but in a very real sense, all things have the stamp of Christ upon them, or at least the signature of God. [39] Christ, therefore, came not only to reveal God and the purpose of redemption for the soul, but he also came to manifest true humanity; the way men were created to live.

In man's very constitution and nature--physically, mentally, and spiritually--he was made by God to be in a personal relationship of dependence upon Him; and being so constituted, he cannot properly live or find rest outside of God. Augustine voiced this same opinion when he said, "Thou hast made us for thyself, and we are restless until we rest in Thee." "The will of God is not something other than, or opposed to your real nature. It is your real nature." [40] Brunner agrees that God leaves the imprint of his nature upon whatever he does; the creation of the world must be considered a revelation

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37 The New Testament: A New Translation by James Moffatt. (New edition, revised; New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1935), John 1:3.

38 Ibid., Colossians 1:16.

39 E. Stanley Jones, The Way (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1941), p. 7.

40 E. Stanley Jones, Is the Kingdom of God Realism? (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1940), p. 73.

and self-communication of God. [41] Thus logic compels a modification of Barth's animus against Natural Theology.

> The doctrine of predestination--that some are predestined to heaven and some to hell--has been rightly thrown out of the window. But does it now come back again through the door of manifest fact? Is there a destiny written into the nature of reality, written into our blood, nerves, tissues, relationships--into everything? Are we predestined by the very nature of things to be Christian? And is that destiny not merely written in the Bible, but written in us, in the very make-up of our being? [42]

The point to be made here is not that Adam sinned against nature; he sinned against God and reversed his proper relationship to God; nevertheless, in so doing he also transgressed the laws of his being. As a gestalt not one part of his essential constitution was left unaffected. Mention has already been made that death--the unnatural separation of his essential being into its component parts--was one result of sin. But not only was death an unnatural effect; all sin was contrary to his constitution and thus unnatural. In this sense, when a man sins he not only affects his relationship to God or his fellows, but he really militates against himself, for he was designed for conformity to God's law. This is but another way of stating that sin is its own punishment. Adam broke himself upon the law of God, just as has every sinner since.

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41 Heinrich Emil Brunner, Nature and Grace. (English translation of Natur und Gnade: Zum Gesprach mit Karl Barth with the reply, Nein!, by Karl Barth appearing in the one volume entitled, Natural Theology. London: Geoffrey Bles, Ltd., The Centenary Press, 1946), p. 25.

42 Jones, The Way, loc. cit.

The consequence of Adam's sin, therefore, was total--that is, it extended to his total life, and more than that, to the world over which he had been given dominion. When he chose to have his wilful way in preference to the design of God, he disrupted the whole of his relationships. Man is a person who stands at all times in some relationship to God. Belief or non-belief, obedience or rebellion may condition that relationship, but man's relationship to God never ceases. To the very core and essence of his being man is related to God, "for when God creates a man, he creates that relationship by the same act--without the relationship there would be no man." [43] But man and his total relationships were wholly designed for alignment with God's will, and when man rebelled, the relationship became a source of oppression. Rather than an inward fulfillment, the negative relationship produced a sense of being ill at ease, estranged, inwardly outraged, and guilty. Thus rebellion at once brought condemnation upon Adam. Sin began to be its own punishment, for he alienated himself not only from God, but also from the way he was made to live. Hence, not only was the central relationship of his life--his relationship to God--distorted, but he was caught in a vicious circle--he himself was undone. He chose to "save his life," and, behold he had "lost it!"

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43 Farmer, op. cit., pp. 79f.

The result of sin was a tragic blindness. Adam lost his vision and perspective. No longer could he see the truth concerning himself, nor could he discern the true meaning of his life. He could no longer know God's will for himself, but was left a wanderer, out of sorts with God and with himself.

> The . . . reason why sin blinds has to do . . . with the fact that God's claim upon man is written into the very constitution of his being--or, . . . though man can refuse it, he cannot escape it. He can no more escape it than he can escape being a man. The claim of God is upon him and in him all the time--because he is a man. What is the result? For the sake of his own peace of mind there begins in the sinner's mind a process of disguising from himself the real nature of his self-centered desires, his refusal of the claim of God . . . rationalization . . . 44

Had all of this been limited to himself the result would have been tragic, but the consequences of Adam's sin were not merely personal, they were racial. Some doctrine of solidarity, based upon the headship of the race in Adam, is necessary to understand adequately the transmission of depravity arising from the original sin. Such is the view of Paul, Augustine, Luther, Calvin, and Wesley. The consequence upon the race was individually and racially inherited depravity, with is far from meaning that each individual is held culpable for original sin. Original sin as guilt cannot be transmitted! The Original Sin was committed once and for all by the representative of the race--Adam--and the result is not that each

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44 Ibid., p. 85.

person is guilty of that sin or inherits that sin, rather, he inherits the result of that sin--alienation and inherited depravity. For the purposes of this conclusion, this distinction between original sin and depravity should be borne in mind. Original sin was the personal sinful act of Adam, whereas the racial consequences are expressed in terms of inherited depravity, which originated in original sin to be sure, but is not identical with it. It is just as absurd to talk about the transmission of original sin as it is to refer to the atonement --the act of the New Adam--as transmissible to each believer. The act of the atonement was completed once and for all. It is not transmissible from person to person; it is the benefit, the result of that completed act which is bestowed upon the New Israel.

When Adam sinned his communion with God was severed. It is true that as a man his relationship to God could not be severed, but it became a relationship of rebellion. The place that God should have occupied in man's life was replaced by egocentricity. Hence, the Spirit of God was forced to withdraw from man's life. Much as he might be sorry for his plight, therefore, man no longer had the power to live in the state of his original righteousness. For, as has been pointed out, man was constituted within his very nature to live according to God's will, and in communion with him. As Curtis puts it, "man needs to have for organization the motive of moral

love." [45] When man replaced this motive of moral love with a motive of self-love, his life lost its center and organizing principle. His natural tendencies were no longer united and aligned with God's will, but were left to their own caprices. Man's original tendency toward good became a tendency toward evil, for in this disrupted state, without God's fellowship as the integrative factor, he was helpless. He could never bring order out of the chaos for he himself was that chaos.

It is common to refer to various aspects of Adam's nature as having been lost. Thus it is said that Adam lost his freedom, he lost his rational powers, he lost his moral sense, all involved in the loss of the image of God. The use of this word "lost" may carry with it unfortunate materialistic overtones. Adam did not lose any of these essential elements of his humanity. They simply lost their original potency because his nature became disrupted and disintegrated. They lost "stature" simply because they served an unworthy purpose --that of egocentric living. The loss of the imago was a defacement, not a destruction. The basic loss, therefore, was that of fellowship and communion with God; the loss of the Holy Spirit as the true organizing principle of his nature. The cause of this loss, his egocentricity, was found to be entirely insufficient as a replacement, for it was contrary to

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45 Curtis, op. cit., p. 201.

his constitutional design.

Adam's broken fellowship was extended to the whole of the race. Every human being is born with this transcendental relationship to God so distorted by virtue of Adam's original sin, that aside from redemption, the true integrative principle of his life--the Spirit of God--is inaccessible. In this sense, depravity may be said to be inherited, for it inevitably results from man's position under God as an alien. Why God thus chose to make Adam representative of the race is in the last analysis inexplicable, but that he did is the clear testimony of both the Bible and historic orthodoxy.

How is depravity transmitted? Sangster objects to the conception of depravity as a thing.[46] Paul S. Rees aptly summarizes the objections of several contemporary writers. These theologians charge traditional orthodoxy, especially Wesleyan Arminianism, of erring by thinking of man's depravity as a "thing, a quantum, an entity in itself, which can be removed like a cancer or a bad tooth."[47] Modern research in heredity has exploded the myth of inherited acquired characteristics. Were depravity an entity, a "something" positive in the human nature, its transmission would be out of the question.

Curtis explains depravity on the basis of the unorgan-

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46 W. E. Sangster, The Path to Perfection (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1943), p. 187.

47 Rees, op. cit., p. 10.

ized character of the individual life. Man possesses all of the native elements of human nature, but they are a cluster of unrelated items. Man is born into the world in this inorganic condition. It was originally intended that man should be a fully organized individual through a life of constant personal intimacy with God; "to have his moral life perfectly saturated with that blessed holy fellowship." [48] Thus it was intended that man should be at home with God; but this personal vision and intimacy with God was intercepted and perverted by the racial representative. The best organizing principle upon which man can now build his moral person is conscience, which is altogether inadequate. Hence, instead of the moral love and fellowship which are necessary for man to become wholly organized, he lives under moral fear, realizing his creatureliness and dependence, yet severed from the source of life. "No wonder he is afraid all alone out there under that vast, ever-growing, absolutely pitiless moral demand." [49]

In this manner the whole race, solidarily in Adam, was involved in the negation of the fellowship with God. Hence to be born a human being means to be born depraved, for simply to be born a member of the race is to be born under the negation of communion with God, and thus to be disorganized. No

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48 Curtis, loc. cit.

49 Loc. cit. et seq.

acquired characteristics foreign to original human nature are involved. Since Adam's descendants are born under the curse which deprives human nature of the Spirit of God as its integrating factor, hereditary depravity "is only the law of natural hereditary, but that law operating under the . . . consequence of Adam's sin." [50]

Why was God thus forced to withdraw from communion with the race? If the descendants of Adam are not born actually sinful; if the guilt of the original sin is not imputed to them; why should God's Spirit be withdrawn from them? This question involves the holiness, justice, and love of God, and is related principally to the doctrine of God and soteriology rather than to the specific discussion of Christian anthropology. Curtis finds no other explanation for the recession of the divine personal companionship from the race than the realistic fact of God's hatred for sin. This hatred is not sentimentality, not is it impersonal or arbitrary; it arises from the very holiness of his being.

> . . . we are to think . . . of the law of God's holiness as plunging eternally into his absolutely exhaustive self-consciousness, and there furnishing motive for an active, personal hatred of all sin as a violation of that fundamental holiness. Thus, God not only hates sin, but <u>he means to hate it</u>. [51]

Universal sinning is a fact of experience which cannot

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50 H. Orton Wiley, <u>Christian Theology</u> (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1941), II, 125.

51 Curtis, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 204.

be denied. It merely attests the fact that the fellowship between God and the race is broken, but does not explain why. But God did effect a means of reconciliation, as will be indicated later. Mankind, through Adam, had broken that fellowship, and man had to restore it. Yet man in his helpless condition without that necessary fellowship was caught in a maelstrom from which extrication was impossible. Hence God alone was able to provide the means of restoration. The only answer was the God-man, Christ Jesus. The fact still stands, however, that racially this communion is severed, and to be born into the race is to be dependent upon God yet in a negative relationship to him.

V. THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN DEPRAVITY OR THE DEMERIT OF SIN AND HUMAN NATURE

There is a necessary distinction to be made between human nature and depravity. The essential constituents of human nature within each individual are neither moral nor immoral; they are morally neutral. Depravity merely means that human nature has been conditioned by the withdrawal of divine fellowship. It represents the negation of the originally intended organization of human nature. This negative aspect then gives rise to concrete forms of evil through personal sin. No one is held either guilty or accountable for the demerit which resulted from original sin. The peril of sin,

therefore, lies in personal sin and personal self-assertion which commandeers the morally neutral human nature into nonconformity to God's law through an act of intentional violation.[52]

Depravity is used adjectively to describe the particular state in which human nature may be, but it does not refer to the human nature itself. The essential human nature--the physical, mental, and spiritual traits of man--makes a person essentially human in distinction from all other forms of creation. Regardless of whether or not the individual is affected by the demerit of sin, these traits are manifest and must be operative as long as man is truly a human being.

Again, depravity does not necessarily mean that man's nature is foul or corrupted; rather, it means "that everything in human life is affected by the fundamental wrong relationship to God which lies at the very root of man's being."[53] In a word, it is the demerit which resulted from Adam's Primal Sin, by which human nature lost its organizing principle or fellowship with God. It is the condition of the essential human traits which inevitably gives direction toward evil, but is not the traits themselves. Thus, depravity is not in itself a defect in the primal elements of human nature; it is a defect in the organization of human nature.

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52 Ibid., pp. 206f.

53 Farmer, op. cit., p. 95.

As has already been stated, human nature is neither moral nor immoral; it is neutral or amoral. Human nature is not merely morally neutral in the abstract, but it is existentially and empirically so even though it may be under the domination of evil. As far as his distinctively human traits are concerned, therefore, each person is born with a nature which is just as capable of being directed toward the good as it is toward the evil. This is but to say that human nature is the same whether in the saint or in the sinner--each is distinctively human. The former's human nature is properly organized in accordance with the laws of his constitution, in fellowship with God. The sinner, on the other hand, is disorganized because he attempts to organize himself about a false center--his ego.

When man becomes a sinner he does not lose his humanity. In fact, the distinctively human characteristic, self-transcendence, alone makes it possible for man to live in opposition to his constitution. Man's faculties are not impaired by sin, in fact they participate in sin and are carried along by it. "They suffer the fundamental distortion of an alien will." [54] But they equally participate in the life of the saint who enjoys the fundamental harmony of a reconciled will. In a word, the same propensities are resident within human nature when it is

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54 Hopper, op. cit., p. 251.

conditioned toward sin as when it was originally conditioned toward righteousness prior to the withdrawal of divine fellowship.

How does this view account for universal sinning? If human nature is neutral and fully capable of direction toward both good and evil, why is it that natural man since the time of Adam has never been able to direct it toward the good? Why has he always become a sinner? There is an element of truth in Niebuhr's contention, as interpreted by Rees, that to be finite is not a sin, but to be finite is to be a sinner.[55] This suggestion is significant only if its relevancy applies to man after the Fall and the Primal Sin of Adam, whereby the relationship of the race to God was reversed from that which was originally intended. Man, dependent and finite, is born into this world with an amoral or neutral human nature, and is intrinsically capable of development in the direction of either goodness or evil. But man, because of his position under God as a member of an estranged or alienated race--not because of an evil human nature--finds it impossible to live as he was created to live, and he becomes anxious (to borrow another concept from Niebuhr), or he becomes morally fearful (to borrow a concept from Curtis).[56]

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55 Rees, op. cit., p. 9.

56 Niebuhr, op. cit., p. 250; Curtis, op. cit., pp. 210f.

Man's life was not made to be lived in suspension. A state of anxiety cannot long remain without producing some effort to relieve the tension. Hence man soon seeks to replace his dependence by a spirit of independence. A distinctive part of human nature is man's religious inclination. He is so constituted that he must have gods to whom he renders homage. "'Man always had God or an idol.' He can no more rid himself of this dimension of his existence than he can rid himself of the dimension of time. . ." [57] Some center of loyalty must replace the void left by his estrangement from God, and the logical, most immediate loyalty is to himself. In this respect, Niebuhr makes the valid observation that evil in the human situation arises because man does not acknowledge his finiteness and dependence, and commits the personal sin of grasping after power and security which are beyond the possibility of achievement. Note that this is one of the salient points in the doctrine of the kenosis of Christ as presented by Paul:

> Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient . . . 58

Hence, to grasp after illegitimate power constitutes an act of

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57 Brunner, op. cit., p. 25.

58 The Holy Bible (Standard edition, newly edited by the American Revision Committee, A.D. 1901, New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1901), Philippians 2:5-8.

personal sin for which the individual is accounted responsible and culpable. In this manner, the amoral human nature is bent under the domination of evil or actual sin.

There is a sense, therefore, in which the finality of the Fall consists in the fact that every person renews the Fall afresh. He is inextricably caught in the human process of falling, nor can he get back to his origin. His own efforts to do so lead only to further involvement in sin and egocentricity.[59] If it is granted that there was a historical fall and an original sin by Adam which produced the demerit that is responsible for man's position under God as an alien, there is a further truth in the fact that "original sin" is a part of present human experience. There is a sense in which men who have been created for fellowship with God are continually repudiating their dependence upon that fellowship.[60] Thus individual man re-enacts the "fall" and involves himself in "original sin" in the sense that he originates his own culpability for personal sin.

This view does not warrant the statement, however, that "Everyman is his own 'Adam'. . ."[61] This would imply that Adam's sin was inevitable. But he was originated in a relationship of positive communion with God; his nature was properly

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59 Brunner, op. cit., pp. 171ff.

60 Whale, op. cit., p. 52.

61 Loc. cit.

organized under this fellowship. Hence he had every reason to keep from sinning. Mankind since his fall, however, has not been in a similar situation. Men are born into a race whose relationship to God is negative. His life is unorganized through the loss of its proper center, and man inevitably brings his human nature under the domination of evil through personal sin. Thus, the situation of Adam and his posterity is worlds apart. This was the fundamental error of Pelagius and all true Pelagians through the centuries.

It might be concluded, therefore, that the view expressed in this section does not deflect from the universality of sinning, rather it insists that such is inevitable. It does, however, deny that this sinning is due to the intrinsic sinfulness of human nature; it is said to be due to the universal position of all men under God as alien. Hence, it is a truism to say that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God," [62] but this does not mean that man is born a sinner; it only means that he inevitably becomes a sinner. Note the Psalmist's analysis in this regard: "The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies." [63] No clearer support of the thesis outlined above could be found. Man is a member of an estranged race, and as a result, he is prone to commit personal sin, to rationalize

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62 Romans 3;23.

63 Psalms 58;3.

(speak lies) concerning his helplessness and dependence, and to go astray because he lacks the necessary organizing principle of his life.

In spite of the possibility of needless repetition in this particular section, the following summary may add a little light to the postulate which is defended here. Even as a member of a "fallen" race which is estranged or alienated from God, man's psychological structure remains--body, mind, and spirit. Nor is this structure intrinsically vitiated or debased; rather, it is perverted in its uses. Just as the psychological structure of human nature remains, so man's relation to God remains, for as a man he is always related to God. "But the relation is perverted and the perversion militates toward perversity in all man's acts." [64]

VI. THE RELATIONSHIP OF INHERITED DEPRAVITY AND OVERT SIN

The sixth postulate of the position resulting from this investigation is the fact that overt sinning results from the covert disunity. It has already been indicated that man is not born with a sinful human nature, but he inherits a basic disorganization and disbalance within his human nature. To say that human nature can be reduced to three basic drives--the herd, the sex, and the self--is an oversimplification;

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64 Hopper, op. cit., p. 226.

nevertheless, for general purposes these three drives do sufficiently indicate the major areas of human nature. If man's nature is depraved or disintegrated, there must be a basic disbalance with regard to these three basic drives. Empirical evidence would seem to indicate that basic unbalance which arises by man's position under God as an alien, seems to minimize the herd and overemphasize the self drives. This would give to depravity a positive aspect of selfishness which arises from the prior negative aspect--the withdrawal of God's Spirit. Man's overt sin, consequently, is basically selfish action arising from his covert disunity.

Why should the herd instinct be minimized any more than the self instinct? Herbert H. Farmer provides a plausable answer in his recent volume, God and Men. According to Dr. Farmer, each person is an independent source of activity which is neither accessible or controllable by another person. Nevertheless, the two are indissolubly bound to one another, condition one another, and are inescapable from each other. The dilemma, therefore, in a social situation is the fact that individuals are free from each other, yet are bound to one another. How, then, can two or more wills, two independent personalities, ever achieve a unity or harmony with one another? [65]

The answer lies in the "claim" of each person on the

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65 Farmer, op. cit., pp. 56f.

other. This is a mutual recognition that each must be under a certain restraint or constraint which recognizes the other as an independent person. This "relationship of claim-upon-one-another is part of the essential constitution and structure of the personal world, and nothing can alter it . . ."[66] But to say that there is a claim--a mutual conditioning of two persons by one another--is to speak only of the ideal. In practical life these claims often clash. The only adequate solution can be found when

> . . . persons acknowledge themselves to be, in their reciprocal claims, under a third and higher claim, which comprehends their claims upon one another and lays itself equally and impartially upon all in an absolute rule, the right of which to undeviating obedience neither questions.[67]

> In other words, every finite person--by the very nature and constitution of the personal world as God has made it --stands in a dual personal relationship of claim; he is related at the same time and all the time to the claim of the infinite Person and to the claim of other finite persons. 67.

When the absolute, overall, third claim of God is disrupted, then all of the lesser claims on a finite level clash. The herd drive, therefore, becomes thwarted by conflict between persons and the self-drive takes the dominant position. Depravity is primarily a negation which inevitably gives rise to a positive egocentricity.

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66 Ibid., p. 58.

67 Ibid., p. 59.

68 Ibid., p. 62.

It might be argued that mankind need not be disorganized because he is alien from God. Cannot he become perfectly integrated about himself? Is not the ego an adequate center of life? It cannot be denied that egocentricity is the dominant characteristic of man without God, but rather than becoming an integrating principle, selfishness leads to further disintegration. True humanity is a "synthesis of the finite and the infinite, of limited knowledge and unlimited capacity, of the contingent and the potential." [69] Boiled down to its essence, this merely means that man is a creature on the one hand, but has a capacity--necessarily must have the capacity--for God on the other. To deviate from this mean is to repudiate true humanity, and to abandon humanity can mean nothing other than the abandonment of the self to a policy of self-destruction. This is exactly what happens when the self becomes exalted as its own center because the self then oversteps its creaturehood and attempts to universalize its capacity for the infinite. Egocentricity inevitably leads the self to tyranny over others, becoming hateful thereby; and "it becomes hateful on its own account because it loves itself and no others, and is therefore not lovable." [70] "The true center of the self is not in itself but in God. True self-knowledge is to know that not in ourselves do we find truth. True wisdom consists in being

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69 Hopper, op. cit., p. 290.

70 Loc. cit. et. seq.

rightly related to God." [71] Augustine gave classic expression to this view in his famous statement, "Thou awakest us to delight in Thy praise; for Thou madest us for Thyself, and our heart is restless, until it repose in Thee." [72] Hence, to attempt a complete integration about the ego as the center of life is a short-cut to self-destruction and disorganization.

Man is not guilty of the negative aspect of depravity or the disorganization of his nature as a result of the demerit of the original sin, but he soon becomes culpable and guilty of the positive aspect. There comes a time when he must either choose to renounce his egocentricity and accept the means of reconciliation which God has provided through Christ, or he must give his personal approbation of his self will in rebellion against the divine will. Wesley admits that men are not personally guilty of Adam's original sin. The full sense of guilt can arise from no other source than the actual sins of the individual. Hence, God is never responsible for eternal damnation; it is contingent upon personal responsibility. Actual sin, for which each individual is responsible, is said to result from the demerit of the original sin, but if Adam's sin alone is the cause of all actual sin then he alone is guilty. "But this is not the case: by the grace of God we may

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71 Loc. cit.

72 Augustine, The Confessions of S. Augustine (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1909), p. 1.

cast away our transgressions: therefore, if we do not, they are chargeable on ourselves . . . By grace we may conquer this inclination; or we may choose to follow it, and so commit actual sin." [73]

Man who inherits an alienation from God, who finds that the center of his being is thus disintegrated, soon finds it difficult to abstain from intentional and volitional breaking of God's law. In fact, he is helpless to do otherwise apart from divine grace. The apostle Paul was vividly aware of this plight when he wrote:

> So this is my experience of the Law: I desire to do what is right, but wrong is all that I can manage; I cordially agree with God's law, so far as my inner self is concerned, but then I find another law in my members which conflicts with the law of my mind and makes me a prisoner to sin's law that resides in my members. [74]

Paul was simply saying here that through his distinctively human propensity of self-transcendence he may transcend the natural processes and detect the alternatives presented to him; he may foresee the caprices and perils of the human situation, yet he is involved in them and of himself cannot extricate himself from them. [75] As a dependent and finite creature he could

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73 John Wesley, "The Doctrine of Original Sin, according to Scripture, Reason, and Experience," The Works of Reverend John Wesley. (First American complete and standard edition, New York: J. Emory and B. Waugh, 1831), V, 548.

74 Moffatt, op. cit., Romans 7:21-23.

75 Niebuhr, op. cit., p. 250.

sense the hollow void of a disintegrated life or a life partially organized around the inadequate demands of self, yet, involved as he was in an alien race he could not grasp that source of organization for which his constitution was designed. His cry of despair is contemporary with every serious minded individual, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me . . ." The glorious fact for the whole of the alienated race is expressed in Paul's reply to his own question, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." [76]

VII. CHRIST AND RESTORATION

The last conclusion: Man needs redemption in two ways: (1) As a moral person and a responsible sinner before God he needs to be forgiven and united with God. (2) As a disrupted person, he needs to have his being reorganized, integrated, and made complete through the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in his life, and the simplification of his motives to one--perfect love.

It has been indicated that man may recognize his plight and wish it were otherwise, but still he is unable to do anything about it. Redemption, therefore, must be something other than the mere persuasion of man that he needs to reform and to reaffirm his dependence. God could not, by the very holiness, justice, and love of his being, simply forget the whole thing

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76 Moffatt, op. cit., Romans 7:24, 25.

and arbitrarily set man right again; and, since man is unable to meet the justice of God by his very finiteness as well as by his undone, disorganized condition, the whole problem of a restoration of the fellowship between God and man reaches an apparant impasse. Apparantly if anything was ever to be done, however, it was going to require the initiative by God. Hence, God provided the plan whereby God and man combine. It is necessary that a man meet God's judicial requirement, yet God alone is able to do it. The perfect answer was Christ Jesus--the Deus-homo.

Man did not lose his faculties or his essential constitution; therefore he is ever a self-determining and self-transcending individual. Christ bridged the gap between God and man, but man still has to choose to meet the conditions of that reconciliation. If he determines to continue in his state of disintegration and self-will, he continues to be alienated and to commit actual sin. On the other hand, he may admit his dependence, renounce his egocentric living, repent of his actual sin, and submit himself to God. By so doing, he discovers the life for which he was constituted; he discovers the truth that to find his life he must "lose himself."

This experience of conversion reinstates man with God and his sins are forgiven. Such an experience can only come by faith. Faith is a perfect trust in Christ which involves the whole man as a gestalt, which presupposes that he senses

a moral need and has repented for his personal sin. It provokes the feeling of both duty and love toward Christ. The sinner is then said to be justified which means that God, because of the death of Christ, and "on condition of a repentant sinner's faith in Christ as his divine Savior, receives him into full favor." [77] But action within God's attitude toward man is not the whole of conversion; it further involves a psychological new birth, i.e. in the ψυχή of each repentant sinner, known as regeneration;

> Regeneration is the primary reorganization of a person's entire motive-life by the vital action and abiding presence of the Holy Spirit so that the ultimate motive is loyalty to Jesus Christ. 78

Brunner and Niebuhr both feel that this experience of regeneration can never be complete in this life. Christ is merely a hope, not a possession; perfection can never pass beyond the stage of intention into reality; release of tension is possible in a partial way, but the peace of achievement must be reserved until this mortality shall put on immortality. The separation from God can be overcome in faith, in principle, but not in actual consequences. [79]

There is a sense in which the consequences of the alienation from God cannot be wholly overcome. Mankind will never be free from mistakes and limited knowledge. His being is never fully integrated to the last degree. Death, a

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77 Curtis, op. cit., p. 363.

78 Ibid., p. 365.

79 Brunner, op. cit., p. 488; Niebuhr, op. cit., p. 125.

consequence of this alienation, awaits saint and sinner alike. Nevertheless, there is an area in man's moral life where his motives become single, where the integration of his human nature is perfected to the point that his sole volitional intent is to do the whole will of God and to serve Him with perfect love. In a word, there is a second definite step in salvation where regeneration reaches a point of completion in the area indicated above. There can be a final integration in human motive.

Niebuhr and Brunner correctly maintain that the capacity to sin is always present with man as long as he lives in this world. It is quite true that the capacity for new evil will never be avoided by grace; for as long as the self remains within the twofold condition of involvement in natural processes and of transcendence over them, it will be subject to "falling" again into sin. [80] Niebuhr seems to confuse this capacity to sin with the demerit of sin itself, but the capacity to sin and depravity are not synonymous.

If Kierkegaard's assertion be true, that temptation presupposes sin, and than a person could never be tempted if he were free from it, [81] then Christian perfection would be utterly impossible, and Niebuhr would be correct. The wholly regenerated or entirely sanctified person can be tempted, often

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80 Niebuhr, loc. cit.

81 Ibid., p. 151.

by his virtues clamoring to be exercised. In other words, he may be tempted through the legitimate claims of his human nature in a manner similar to the temptation of Adam and Eve.

Temptation, however, does not presuppose sin in the nature. The New Testament writer, James, gives the following insight into temptation:

> . . . but each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin; and sin when it is full-grown brings forth death. 82

It might be claimed that "his own desire" refers to the old principle of depravity still evident, but such an interpretation would violate the whole tenor of the New Testament which is in favor of the resolving of this depraved condition. Temptation arises from man's morally neutral human nature. Whether or not temptation becomes sin depends upon whether the individual yields to these legitimate desires in the direction of evil or toward that which is good. Even after entire sanctification a man is capable of thus "falling" and becoming involved again in a state of alienation from God, for just as Adam and Eve were disobedient through perverting the virtue of self-determination, so might anyone else be disobedient and commit an "original sin" by deviating from the will of God. It would be original in the sense that it would originate

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82 The New Covenant Commonly Called the New Testament of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (Revised standard edition, New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1946), James 1:14, 15.

another alienation from God's fellowship. Thus, temptation is not a sin for it grows out of legitimate desire; but it may lead to an unholy and perverted expression, and become sin.

Even though the possibility of sinning remains, the disintegrated human nature is capable also of being made whole again. Granted that it would amount to a finite perfection, a relative perfection; granted that problems in connection with the self and society will always remain; nevertheless, the whole nature once again can be set into proper balance, and man's will can be aligned with God's will. It is only at the completion of regeneration--usually called entire sanctification --that the Holy Spirit has intimate fellowship as an indwelling presence in man and full integration takes place. This ideal may become existential and empirical, and need not be a mere hope or intention.

Mistakes may be made through physical frailty and misunderstanding, but the will can be unswerving in its fidelity to do as much as finitely possible with the aid of the indwelling Holy Spirit to bring every part of the human nature into complete surrender to the will of God. It is only by this complete subjection of the arrogant human will to the divine will that life in its fullness, life abundant, will ever be reached. Then, and only then, can man live in harmony with God and with himself.

What differentiates the two experiences of conversion

and complete regeneration or entire sanctification? Curtis interprets the saving faith involved in the initial experience of regeneration as a loyalty toward Christ which includes a feeling of both duty and love. The element of duty is the stronger of these two aspects in loyalty to Christ. Yet duty implies a conflict, for the sense of "what ought to be" and the "what is" are often widely separated. "In his life of struggle to do his duty he cannot organize his inner personal life. He has the beginning, the ground plan . . . of an organism," but he is too preoccupied with his duty to carry out this plan. [83] Regeneration reaches its completion in personal holiness where this motive of loyalty is transformed from a dual motive into a simple motive of pure love. The ethical quality of duty is as strong as ever, but it is engulfed in an overpowering moral love. "The holy person does not do things because it is his duty to do them, but because he loves to do them." [84] It is only in this atmosphere of perfect love that the Spirit can have free access to fully integrate the disorganized or depraved human nature and to re-establish intimate fellowship with the human spirit.

The core of the whole matter may be summed up in this concept of love. Christ enunciated the law of love by which man was created to live when he said, "Thou shalt love the Lord

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83 Curtis, op. cit., p. 390.

84 Loc. cit.

thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. . . . Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." [85] Man was made to love God with all of his powers. This would result in the corollary law of loving one's neighbor as himself. Sin or selfishness perverted this love principle and rather than being peoperly balanced by being integrated around Perfect Love--God's fellowship with man in the Person of the Holy Spirit--man became engrossed in an inordinate self-love. Man consequently substituted self-assertiveness for obedience to the will of God. The process of integration wrought by the second work of grace can be said to be the reinstatement of Perfect Love as the center of man's moral life. The proper balance is then restored and man is once again capable of normal loving and living.

When depravity is removed, there is nothing taken from the human nature, for a man is just as human after the experience of integrating grace as before. In fact, humanity finds its originally intended norm in a reorganization of all of its traits with reference to righteousness.

> Pride, perhaps closest to the very essence of sin of all human traits outside the dominion of grace, is restored to that proper self-regard without which even sainthood is unlovely; anger directed under sin to the destruction of aught that checks the selfish will, under the fullness of grace becomes the temper of a sanctified will; lust, which under sin's dominion makes sensual pleasure

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85 Matthew 22:37, 39.

> the goal of desire, is transmuted by grace to the pure gold of love which embodies not merely in a physical form but in a person--one person--its affection, and sacrifices its all to that person's welfare. 86

This is not the end of the process, however; it is merely the opening of a new life which requires constant adjustment and committment to the will of God. Self-surrender must be continuous. Daily must one surrender to God's will, never assuming control himself. Life is intent upon finding and keeping the will of God for individual need.

It is easy to become engrossed in one aspect of Christianity and to overlook some of the other necessary aspects of a well-balanced spiritual life. The apostle Paul realized the danger of becoming one-sided in Christian living when he wrote I Corinthians 13. An analysis by James Stewart points out that Paul began this great chapter by distinguishing between the vital element of the religion of Christ and those gifts and graces which are a part of that religion, but which, when taken by themselves, may prove to become more of a snare than an adornment:

> "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels"--that is religion as ecstatic emotionalism. "Though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge"--that is religion as intellectualism, speculation. "Though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains"--that is religion as working energy. "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor"--that is religion as humanitarianism. "Though

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86 Leslie Ray Marston, From Chaos to Character (Winona Lake, Indiana: Light and Life Press, 1944), p. 159.

> I give my body to be burned"--that is religion as asceticism. 87

All of these are one-sided and inadequate representations when taken by themselves. The integrated Christian life includes all of these aspects in their proper relationship when organized around the vital element of Christian love.

The apostle Paul insists in Romans 13:14, "Put on the character of the Lord Jesus Christ." [88] Christ becomes real and a vital part of life through full surrender and the infilling of the Holy Spirit. As he completely controls the life, it will not major on one aspect of Christianity, but will be unified about the principle of Perfect Love in its relationships both to God and man. As E. Stanley Jones has written:

> If the Spirit lives within us, he will not make us other than Christlike. . . . Did Jesus ever go off into any visions or dreams? Did he ever traffic in the merely mysterious or occult? Was there anything psychopathic about him? Was he not always well poised, always balanced, always sane? Was he not always upon the essential, the worthwhile? Was he ever misled by a subordinate issue or did he ever take a bypath? Was there about him any rampant emotionalism? He was indeed tremendously emotional, but was it not restrained and directed emotion—directed toward human need? To ask these questions is to answer them. The Spirit was to be "another Comforter." Note the "another." He was to be just like Christ. And Christ, the Man of the Burning Heart, was also the Man of the Balanced Heart. So the Spirit brings poise, balance, integration, symmetry, and consequent power into the human

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87 James Stewart, A Man in Christ (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, n.d.), p. 1.

88 Moffatt, op. cit., Romans 13:14.

life.[89]

No one would deny that emotions, the intellect, faith as working energy, humanitarianism, and asceticism all have value when properly related and controlled by the Holy Spirit. To surrender to this integrating Spirit is not only man's privilege but his duty, both to himself and to God.

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89 E. Stanley Jones, The Christ of Every Road (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1930), p. 89f.

CHAPTER II. A SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

1. The Biblical account of man's origin is the most satisfactory explanation for Christian anthropology.

2. Adam was created "good," which means he was: sinless or holy; perfectly integrated; capable of a personal communication and relationship with his Creator; made in the image of God, with full capacity for rational and moral development; self-transcending; self-conscious; and self-determining. Human nature is neither a dualism nor a monism; it is a *gestalt*.

3. The Biblical account of Adam, his fall, and original sin are accepted as historical, but not necessarily literal in every detail.

4. The Fall constituted a personal sin for Adam, and as such had severe personal consequences, but in addition, this Primal Sin had racial consequences which have rendered the whole race estranged from God.

5. There is a necessary distinction to be made between human nature and depravity. The essential constituents of human nature within each individual are neither moral nor immoral; they are morally neutral. Hence, depravity does not mean that human nature is vitiated or debased; it merely means that human nature is in a disorganized condition by the withdrawal of divine fellowship.

6. Overt sinning results from the covert disunity. This would give to depravity a positive aspect of selfishness which arises from the prior negative aspect--the alienation from God.

7. Redemption or restoration through Christ is effective in two ways: (1) The moral person and responsible sinner before God is forgiven and united with God. (2) The disrupted person who needs reorganization and integration is made complete through the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in his life, and the simplification of his motives to one--perfect love.

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